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CHART OF PUNCTUATION AND MECHANICS [1]

ap. or ∨̓	Apostrophe
	1. To form the possessive case (82-83)
	2. As a substitute for omitted letter (161)
	3. To form plurals of figures, numbers, etc. (161)
br. or [/]	Brackets
	1. To enclose extraneous material (162)
	2. To enclose material within parentheses (162)
c. or ∧̦	Comma
	1. To separate principal clauses joined by coördinating conjunctions (142-144)
	2. To set off introductory adverbial clauses (144-145)
	3. To set off non-restrictive phrases and clauses (145-146)
	4. To set off elements inserted or added for emphasis (146-147)
	5. To set off independent elements, appositives, etc. (147-148)
	6. To set off elements in a series (149-150)
	7. To separate elements for clearness (150)
	8. To set off dates, addresses, etc. (150)
	9. To introduce a direct quotation (151, 152-154)
	10. After salutation in personal letter (151)
	11. Not to be used without definite reason (151-152)
caps.	Capitals needed, or misused (273-274; 279-280)
col. or :/	Colon
	1. To introduce a formal enumeration (157)
	2. To introduce a formal quotation (157-158)
	3. To introduce an explanatory phrase or clause (158)
	4. To follow the salutation in a business letter (158)
da. or —/	Dash
	1. To denote a break in thought or construction, or faltering speech (158)
	2. To separate a series of appositive elements from a summarizing word (159)
	3. To set off long or emphatic parenthetical or appositive matter (159)
	4. To add suspense before a climax (159)
	5. Before *namely, that is,* etc. (159)
exclam. or !/	Exclamation point (161)
h. or =/	Hyphen needed, or misplaced (274-276)
ital.	Italics needed, or misused (276-277)
ms.	Manuscript in poor form, or illegible
p.	Punctuation faulty
paren. or (/)	Parentheses
	1. To enclose explanatory or parenthetical material (161)
	2. To enclose supplementary material (162)
	3. To enclose confirmatory figures or symbols (162)
per. or ⊙	Period
	1. To close declarative and imperative sentences (141)
	2. Following abbreviations (141)
	3. To denote omissions ( ) (141)
ques. or ?/	Question Mark
	1. To close direct questions (160)
	2. To indicate doubt (160)
quo. or ∨̈	Quotations and Dialogue
	1. Direct and indirect quotations (152)
	2. Capitalization (152)
	3. Separation of quotation from "labels" (152)
	4. Quotations broken by "labels" (152-153)
	5. Periods and commas inside quotation marks (153)
	6. Punctuation marks except periods and commas, outside (154)
	7. Superfluous punctuation (154)
	8. Quotations within quotations (154)
	9. Paragraphing dialogue (154)
	10. Words, titles, etc. (277-278)
sem. or ;/	Semicolon
	1. Semicolon as small period (155-156)
	a. Between principal clauses *not* joined by coördinating conjunctions (155)
	b. Between principal clauses joined by conjunctive adverbs (155)
	2. Semicolon as large comma (156-157)
	a. To set off a long series (156)
	b. Between long principal clauses joined by coördinating conjunctions (156)
	c. Overuse of semicolon (156, *Note*)
syl. or h. or =/	Hyphenization or syllabication faulty (274-276)
title	Title (personal) wrongly expressed (279-280)
?	Questionable statement
#	Space needed
∼ or tr.	Transpose letters or words
x	Obvious mistake
δ	Delete
⁐	Close up entirely

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[1] References are to pages. "W" following a page reference indicates a "Warning."

1.2

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MODERN ENGLISH WRITING

by

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PREFACE

For a long time the author has felt the need of a book on writing which would fill several specific requirements. These needs can be briefly translated into the objectives which this book seeks to accomplish:

1. To present enough material to meet the normal requirements of a course in composition. The book represents a frank compromise between the minimum essentials and an exhaustive treatment of writing. The naturally gifted student will find here much that he already knows; the student who stands in need of special training will find, perhaps, more material than he can assimilate in a year's time. The majority, however, should be able to master the principles either in a semester of intensive study or during a year's work in which outside reading is combined with composition.

2. To serve as both text and handbook. The principles of writing and the reasons behind them have been explained, rather dogmatically stated as rules, but they have been arranged in such a way that the instructor and student, using the correction chart, can easily use the book for reference work.

3. To provide a planned course of study. The plan, beginning with a study of the whole composition and then of the paragraph, enables the student to learn how to organize his material before he progresses to a study of grammar and punctuation, and, finally, to a consideration of the rhetorical principles governing the sentence. By a system of "warnings" in the chapter on grammar the student is cautioned against certain elementary mistakes before he takes them up again later in the book. For example, the comma fault, faulty reference, dangling participles, and other common errors are brought to the student's attention before they are treated more fully in later chapters. The organization of the material will allow the instructor, if he so desires, to assign the book in consecutive chapters. The arrangement, however, can be varied to suit individual needs and tastes.

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4. To include a thorough and systematic review of grammar. Those instructors who desire a comprehensive, but not exhaustive, treatment will find ample material for their needs. Others, who do not feel the need of teaching grammar to a class, may assign the chapter to individual students whose preparation does not meet the standard of the group.

5. To offer a constructive rather than a destructive approach to the study of composition. Few rules are dogmatically stated unless accompanied by a discussion of the reasons behind the rules, and the wealth of exercise material presents opportunities for the student to analyze examples of good writing as well as to concentrate on correcting mistakes.

6. To do away with some of the outmoded rules contained in the older rhetorics and handbooks, and to avoid, as far as possible, stating principles which the student will see violated every day by competent writers.

The book can conveniently be used in conjunction with Loomis and Clark's *Modern English Readings,* revised edition. From this anthology the author has drawn much of his illustrative material so that the student may discover a correlation between his reading and his writing. *Modern English Readings* is referred to in this book in footnotes merely as L. & C.

The present volume represents an almost complete revision of two prior temporary editions used in the freshman English course at The George Washington University. The fact that the book was used in the classroom by eighteen instructors has furnished a severe and helpful test.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The preparation of this volume, and of the two previous editions, would have been impossible without the generous aid of Mrs. Elizabeth W. Heilman, of the National Geographic Society, who freely gave her time to criticize and edit the manuscripts from beginning to end. To my wife, Rita Rozada Bement, I render equal thanks for her suggestions and for hours of labor on every portion of the book. Mrs. Nigel Herrick gave invaluable assistance in preparing the exercises. I wish also to thank my colleagues of the English Department who furnished constructive criticisms. I am also grateful to the following teachers who offered many valuable suggestions: F. S. Appel, University of Minnesota; Henry C. Edgar, The Hotchkiss School; Edward C. Ehrensperger, University of South Dakota; Laurence F. Hawkins, New York University; A. P. Hudson, University of North Carolina; Douglas L. Hunt, Birmingham Southern College; Frank Hursley, University of Wisconsin; John C. McCloskey, University of Oregon; Franz Montgomery, University of Minnesota; Lyon N. Richardson, Western Reserve University; Stuart Robertson, Temple University; Winfield H. Rogers, Western Reserve University; Gerald Sanders, Michigan State Normal College, Ypsilanti; Robert W. Seitz, University of Buffalo; Warner Taylor, University of Wisconsin; Olive B. White, Bradley Polytechnic Institute; C. B. Williams, De Paul University.

Washington, D. C.
May, 1937

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MODERN ENGLISH WRITING

CHAPTER I

THE COMPOSITION AS A WHOLE

WRITING can be either a chore or a challenge. We can approach it with every muscle tense, as if we were about to climb into the dentist's chair, or we can regard it as a test of our ingenuity, and an invitation to enter into one of the most satisfying of all experiences. For writing involves crystallizing an idea or an impression in our mind and communicating it so that the reader feels the impact of the writer's thought or mood. Thus writing is in a sense creative: since there are no two people who are exactly alike, what each of us thinks or feels is so colored by his own individuality that no other person can duplicate it.

It is, of course, true that not every piece of writing bears this stamp of individuality; yet this defect springs less often from inaptitude than from lack of experience or training. For, while it would be useless to deny that some people write with more natural facility than others, it is also true that the average person can learn to express himself with both accuracy and individuality.

Those who approach writing with apprehension or misgiving might do well to cultivate some of the naïveté of the man who, when asked whether he could play the violin, replied, "I don't know—I've never tried." We cannot all become concert violinists, but we may learn to play for our own pleasure and that of our friends. And so with writing: the enjoyment which comes with creation and communication brings not only a feeling of personal satisfaction but also the thrill of feeling that we have impressed something of ourselves upon another.

All of us have been trained from our childhood to read and write. Both are such common experiences that we take them for granted as we do our digestions, becoming conscious of them only when something is amiss. Only when some incident makes us suddenly aware of our deficiencies do we realize that reading is something more than following words across a page, or writing a more complicated process than stringing pothooks together. Our superficial acquaintance with these common experiences has bred an easy contempt; it is difficult for us to conceive of them both as arts which, like all other arts, require cultivation and practice. We smile at the story of the man who has never tried to play the violin; yet, when it comes to the study of writing, how many of us realize that the authors we admire have spent years in perfecting their technique? For every genius that is born with a gift for self-expression there are a thousand writers who have attained a high standard merely by dint of hard work and incessant practice.

As we commence our study, then, we shall be helped if we can remember that we are bent upon the acquirement of a skill which will afford us something more than a practical return in dollars and cents; rather, it is something that will afford us also the pleasurable satisfaction which comes from the crystallization of our own ideas and impressions, and the communication of them to others.

There are two aspects of our study of writing: substance and form. Substance is the body of our material—the selection and organization of our ideas; form is the technique of presenting them. The first two chapters will deal with substance; later chapters will undertake a detailed study of form.

A. CHOOSING A SUBJECT

One of the prerequisites for success is that we be absorbed in our subject. It is a foregone conclusion that if we ourselves are not interested in our idea, no one else will be.

If we assume that we are free to choose our own topic for writing, our first question should be: What interests *me?* The question is not so selfish or egotistical as it may at first appear; for while a writer's first obligation is to his reader—whether that reader be his instructor, his class, or his roommate—we can safely travel on the assumption that what interests us will probably interest someone else. Each of us has his own particular vocation, avocations, and hobbies; one of us is absorbed in business, another collects stamps, another is devoted to sports, another spends his spare time constructing radios. This enthusiasm will somehow manage to communicate itself, if we will only let it.

But if our resourcefulness should fail us here, and if we cannot find a subject in the field of our own activities, we can look within ourselves. James Harvey Robinson has said, "There is nothing else anything like so interesting to ourselves as ourselves." No matter how short or circumscribed our life has been, we have thought, we have felt, we have *lived*. There are no two leaves alike in the world—and the statement is as true of people as of leaves. Each one of us can say to himself: "I am unique; I am the most interesting object in the world—at least to myself." Some of that interest we may convey to our reader.

If, however, we are not introspective by nature, we can still turn to the world about us. If we do not wish to write about what we have felt or thought, we can have recourse to what we have seen or heard. In this domain, as in the world of our mind, *we* as individuals are still supreme. Whether we will it or not, we, as distinct personalities, color our observation of the outside world; we are the lenses which refract the light that passes from the world to the reader. Be as detached and impersonal as we may, we still see life about us as only we can see it. And because we are reporters, our observation will be interesting provided that we are forthright and honest in expressing what we see and hear. Our first day in school or in college, our childhood discovery that there is no Santa Claus, our first visit to the dentist, a camping trip, a ball game—all these experiences most of our readers have had at one time or another; yet these subjects usually convey some feeling of freshness and vitality when the writer feels the impulse of personal enthusiasm.

If these two possible fields—the world within us and the world without—fail us momentarily, we can turn to our reader. What would interest *him?* After all, he is entitled to some consideration, even if he be only the instructor who will have to read what we have written. What, in general, do people talk about, think about, read about? Problems of conduct, manners, politics, religion—the list could be continued indefinitely. Is a lie ever justifiable? Are women in business entitled to more consideration and courtesy than men? Are the same standards of conduct applicable to both men and women? Should a person assume responsibility for his neighbor? Is bluffing preferable to admitting one's ignorance? Is war ever justifiable? Should government engage in business? Are examinations necessary?

One very fruitful method of collecting and formulating ideas on a topic of this sort is to commence a discussion in a group.

Toss any of the foregoing questions into the arena and soon the fur will fly. As the talk progresses, our own ideas begin to take shape; we find ourselves championing one side or the other. Since our ideas will have to withstand the tests of logic, we shall have to think and talk clearly if we are to hold our own in the discussion. And finally, when the group breaks up, we shall probably discover that we have material for more than one theme. But let us remember that it is still *our* opinion that counts; we should not merely retail the various opinions that have come from others. Perhaps *our* view of a problem is the only original and interesting contribution that we can make to the subject.

The same considerations should apply if we are assigned a topic on which to write. Our first reaction may be that we are not interested, or that we know nothing about the subject. We may be right in both assumptions, but we need not be worried or annoyed. There are a great many subjects in the world in which we think we are not interested; the reason for our indifference is probably our ignorance. The worst thing we can do under the circumstances is to try to *simulate* an interest which we do not feel; the best thing we can do is to *stimulate* our interest by learning something about the subject. There are very few topics under the sun which can remain drab after being attacked by an active and inquiring mind. The library will furnish us with our information, and as facts begin to accumulate, our interest will quicken. The more we know, the more we shall want to know, and the greater will be our pride in having tapped, with the aid of our intelligence and ingenuity, a small part of the great reservoir of the world's knowledge. We shall have discovered something, assimilated it, and made it our own. Certainly this process is a part of our quest for an education.

Writing on assigned topics has a very practical aspect. The business or professional man is called on many times to immerse himself in problems which, at the outset, may have little or no appeal for him. Unfortunately he has no choice in the matter. But more often than not he finds himself becoming absorbed in the very problem which a short while before had seemed so distasteful.

In our search of the library for material, we can be greatly aided by a system of note-taking. This can most conveniently be accomplished by the aid of 3 x 5 index cards, on which we take down each item of information which may possibly bear on our subject. Across the top of each card should be written both the general topic and the specific part of that topic which our note is to cover. The note should be followed by a specific reference to the title, the author of the work, and the page on which the information is to be found. Thus when our research is completed, we shall be in a position to organize the material quickly and efficiently.

B. PRELIMINARIES TO WRITING

We now approach the next step, the organization of our material. Before we can attempt any detailed organization, however, we are confronted with the questions of length and proportion.

The problem of the length of our composition is often settled for us by requirements imposed by others. The instructor frequently specifies the approximate number of words we are to write; in the business world, too, we are often thus limited. Such a limitation may sometimes prove a temporary annoyance, but it offers valuable practice in judging the relative importance of the points we desire to make.

The question of length is closely allied to that of proportion. If we have only so much space in which to present our ideas, we are confronted with two alternatives: we must either take a general bird's-eye view of the topic, or we must narrow the subject down so as to treat only one or two aspects of it. By way of warning it may be said that the average person finds it easier to be general than specific: adopting a broad treatment allows him to escape the embarrassment of offering details or proofs of his points; but it has, at the same time, the distinct disadvantage of betraying him into generalizations and uninteresting truisms. More than likely such a composition will present nothing new or original to the reader—for the simple reason that the writer himself does not have any new or original thoughts or impressions. Almost any reader can generalize for himself; the only justification for any piece of writing is that it will offer the reader fresh insight, new information, or an original point of view.

If we are wise and discard the general treatment of a large topic in favor of the thorough treatment of a portion of it, we shall have to begin by whittling down our original subject, choosing some aspect which in our opinion will appeal to us or to our readers. This whittling is often painful, but it should be none the less ruthless. We may have to lay aside information which we have been at some pains to collect, or points in which we ourselves are especially interested. But we must constantly remember that details are, as a rule, more cogent than generalities. Rarely, except in extended articles, does a writer have the opportunity to indulge effectively in both.

This problem of proportion applies to all types of writing—narrative, descriptive, and expository. If we relate an anecdote or incident, the questions always arise: How far back, in point of time, must I begin? how much can I leave out that is not really necessary to my story? where shall I stop? If we write a description or a sketch, we must discard what is unimportant and combine the remainder into a whole pervaded by a unified tone or mood; certain details and facts, while true, may not be consistent with the impression which we desire to create. If we are propounding an idea, we must decide how much of our subject we can present in the space at our command, what are the most important points, and what is the relative importance of the topics we are to discuss.

C. THE THEME SENTENCE

Let us assume that by the process of rigid excision we have narrowed down our subject to the point where we can handle it effectively in the space allotted to us. The next step in our thinking should be to summarize our ideas in a *theme sentence* which will embody, as succinctly as possible, the kernel of our thought.

This process subjects us to further mental discipline, for frequently we find that we have not narrowed down our subject as much as we thought; there still may be too many ideas, or ideas that will not effectively combine. But only one course remains for us: we must imitate the Queen of Hearts in *Alice in Wonderland* and pronounce the sentence, "Off with their heads!"

Seldom, in a theme of one thousand words or less, should this summarization require more than one sentence. We should view with suspicion any condensation which spins itself out into two or three sentences. A topic which refuses to be thus subdued almost surely indicates that we have not been sufficiently ruthless in playing the role of executioner.

D. READER STRATEGY

When this theme sentence is before us in writing, we can next take up another preliminary question which must now be settled: how shall we present our material in a way which will interest and convince the reader?

This question arises most frequently when we have undertaken to write on a subject which may raise prejudice. Prejudices are as numerous as quills on a porcupine—and quite as dangerous. Many ideas must be presented diplomatically if they are to win acceptance. The average reader is a conservative at heart: he may profess himself liberal and open-minded, but, in common with all other human beings, he has his idiosyncrasies, prejudices, and preconceived notions. As James Harvey Robinson has pointed out,[1] "We are incredibly heedless in the formation of our beliefs, but we find ourselves filled with an illicit passion for them when anyone proposes to rob us of their companionship. It is obviously not the ideas themselves that are dear to us, but our self-esteem, which is threatened. We are by nature stubbornly pledged to defend our own from attack, whether it be our person, our family, our property, or our opinions."

It is our problem, at this point in our organization, to scent the reader's prejudice from afar and to invent ways to overcome and circumvent it. One method is pretending to agree with the very prejudice which we shall later seek to overthrow. In the following introductory paragraph Pearl Buck freely admits, at the outset, the truth of many charges currently made against religion and the churches. She then devotes the remainder of her essay to an exposition of what religion means to her.

> Nothing is more commonplace in our times than to decry the value of religion and even to deny it any place in the scheme of modern life. Everywhere, one hears remarks made that religion is no longer of any practical value, that churches are dead, that the youth of the country is without religion, that Christianity has lost its meaning. Certainly, observation leads one to conclude that these are truisms. So-called religion seems, indeed, to have no longer any practical value.[2]

Another more common method of overcoming prejudice is to commence with a known general truth or an incontrovertible fact, and then to move on through a series of logical steps to the point which we wish to make. Thus we lead the reader gradually from familiar ground into the strange territory which we wish him to explore with us. For example, Henry Pratt Fairchild, the economist, wished to show that society, revolutionizing its conception of work, must in the future consider it a luxury and not a necessity. Since the reader could not be expected to accept such a novel idea without proof, Fairchild commenced at a point where his reader felt on familiar ground: he showed that work, from time immemorial, has been glorified; he then pointed out why, in times past, it has been necessary for man to work in order to get a living; and finally he showed that this same ancient but pernicious "gospel of work" is responsible for the present overproduction which is at the bottom of our twentieth-century economic ills.[3]

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[1] *The Mind in the Making.* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1921. L. & C., p. 162.

[2] "What Religion Means to Me," from the *Forum Magazine,* October, 1933. L. & C., p. 299.

Still another method of overcoming prejudice is to pretend to make light of the point which we are later going to propose seriously for the reader's consideration. Irwin Edman thus introduces an essay on the subject of "morals," a subject which the average reader might find rather bleak and forbidding:

> I suppose I should have been surprised to find Richard and his friends on a Sunday evening engaged in a rather more than tepid discussion of morals. I knew Richard pretty well by this time, and if there is any word that has depressing associations for him, it is the epithet "moral." I tried my best once, while he was an undergraduate, to make him take my course in ethics. I told him, among other things, that it would do him good and that it would help him to do others good. I could not have used less effective propaganda.[4]

Finally, one bit of general advice we can take to heart: a sense of humor is a saving grace. It has won many a battle which would otherwise have been lost if the writer, fired with a sense of righteous conviction, had jumped into the arena and dared the reader to do battle with him.

E. THE OUTLINE

Having narrowed down our subject and planned our approach to the reader, we are now ready for the final organization of our material. This can be best accomplished by means of a written outline.[5]

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[3] "Exit the Gospel of Work," from *Harper's Magazine,* April, 1931. L. & C., p. 172.

[4] "Richard Kane Discovers Morals," from *Richard Kane Looks at Life.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1926.

An outline is a graphic, concise means of ordering our ideas. It may be compared to such apparently dissimilar objects as a skeleton and a blueprint. In one sense it is the framework which we shall later cover with the flesh and sinews of our thoughts; it is also the working plan which we, like architects, shall follow in constructing our theme. Just as a taxidermist cannot stuff an animal without using an artificial skeleton, or as a contractor cannot erect a building without a plan, so a writer cannot hope to accomplish his objective without an orderly arrangement of his ideas.

There are two types of outlines: topic outlines and sentence outlines. The topic outline is composed entirely of words and phrases; it has the advantage of brevity. The sentence outline, as the name implies, is composed of sentences, and is helpful in that it compels us to choose our words carefully and express our ideas exactly. We may follow either kind, but in the course of a given outline we should be consistent in using either one type or the other.

Since an outline must visually portray a logical classification and arrangement of ideas, it must follow a logical method. This relationship among ideas is graphically represented in some such manner as the following:

Theme sentence:
  I. (First major topic)
    A.
      1.
      2.
      3.
    B.
      1.
        a.
          (1)
          (2)
        b.
      2.
  II. (Second major topic), etc.

Roman numerals represent the most important topics, which usually require treatment in separate paragraphs. If, however, a major topic is treated in several paragraphs, letters or arabic numerals may indicate paragraph divisions. Conversely, if a paragraph performs only a minor function—such as acting as a transitional, or linking, device—it need not be included in the outline.

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[5] For an outline of an essay, see p. 28.

In order that the outline may be logical, we must observe certain logical rules. These we may formulate as concisely as possible:

1. Each topic, if subdivided, must have at least two subheads. It is impossible to separate an object into *one* part; an, apple, for example, is cut in *two* or *more* parts—never in *one*.

If we find ourselves attempting to divide a topic into a single subtopic, the probability is that the subtopic is logically a part of the topic itself. For example, in the following outline, II. A is logically the equivalent of II, not a subdivision of it:

I. Types of outline
  A. Topic outline
  B. Sentence outline
II. Advantage of topic outline
  A. Brevity
III. Advantages of sentence outline
  A. More careful choice of words
  B. More exact expression of ideas

Topic II, to be logical, should be written:

"II. Advantage of topic outline: brevity."

There is one seeming exception to this principle: if we wish to include only one example or illustration under a heading, logic does not require two or more; for we are really not *subdividing* our topic at all, but merely adducing evidence. We can summon one witness, or two, or three. In order to distinguish between examples or illustrations on the one hand and subdivisions on the other, we may conveniently label the former with a different system of letters, such as *x*, *y*, and *z*. A logical subdivision of a topic, together with illustrations, may be thus represented:

I. The three most common motives for attending college
  A. To play
    x. My friend, Jonathan Brent
  B. To equip oneself to earn a living
    1. Increasing importance of this motive today
    2. The danger of overemphasizing this motive
      x. Quotation from *Harper's Magazine*
  C. To obtain a liberal education

2. Each subhead should logically subdivide the topic. The following subdivision is illogical:

I. Types of outline
  A. Topic outline
  B. Sentence outline
  C. The difficulties of making an outline

Topic C is not a logical subdivision of I; the difficulties of making an outline are not pertinent to a discussion of the types of outlines. A logical arrangement would read:

I. Types of outlines
  A. Topic outline
  B. Sentence outline
II. The difficulties of making an outline

3. The subheads should be logically coördinate, or parallel. In the following outline, note the confusion caused by stating logically parallel ideas in forms that are not parallel:

I. Types of outlines
  A. The topic outline
  B. The second type: the sentence outline
II. Advantages of the topic outline: brevity
III. Advantages of the sentence outline
  A. It requires a more careful choice of words
  B. More exact expression

We note at once that I. A and I. B, and III. A and III. B are not stated in such a way as to bring out their logical relation to each other or to the main topic.

Let us first take up topic I. We could make A and B coördinate in either of the following ways:

I. Types of outline
  A. The topic outline
  B. The sentence outline

I. Types of outline
  A. The first type: the topic outline
  B. The second type: the sentence outline

In III, A is stated as a sentence and B as a phrase. If both these subheads had been stated as phrases, their coördinate functions would have been apparent at once. The objection to stating them both as sentences lies in the fact that we are making a topic, not a sentence, outline. The following statements are logical:

III. Advantages of the sentence outline
    A. More careful choice of words
    B. More exact expression

F. THE TIME TO WRITE

Before we actually sit down to write, we should make some intelligent provision for budgeting our time.

Our day should be so organized that we can set aside a *definite time* for writing. There are two excellent reasons for a definite schedule: first of all, writing is something that people procrastinate about; they think that it is a matter of "inspiration" or "temperament." They like to feel that they must wait for a certain mood to descend upon them magically—though concerning the source of this inspiration they are inclined to be vague. What they are actually doing, of course, is inventing excellent excuses for delay—excuses which fool no one but themselves. Realizing this human tendency, professional writers usually keep as definite hours as do businessmen; refusing to coddle themselves, they work on a schedule and force themselves into the mood, allowing ample time for both writing and revision. They work against dead lines as rigid as those fixed by an instructor for his students; they have learned, too, by experience that writing always takes longer than one anticipates. The wise writer—be he student or professional—will budget his time in advance and follow his schedule as painstakingly as if he were working for an employer who docks his pay when he is absent from his desk.

There is a second reason for budgeting our time. We should allow ourselves opportunity for a careful revision of our work. No first draft is good enough to submit to anybody, even to a friend. And intelligent revision requires time. After completing the rough draft of a composition we are seldom in a position to criticize it impartially or intelligently. We are too close to it to view it dispassionately, and probably too fatigued to make any fresh or original contributions. We may change a few marks of punctuation and add a word here and there, but that is all we can do at the moment. We should put the first draft away and allow it to "cool off"; the longer the cooling time, the better. Then, when we come back, rested and refreshed, to our original draft, we shall be in a position to criticize it impartially and objectively.

Everyone has experienced the sinking sensation which usually accompanies the rereading of a composition. What moved us to self-congratulatory praise the night before is, in the cold light of the "morning after," as unappetizing as a warmed-over dinner. We want to tear the paper to pieces and begin again. Perhaps we should. But if we have put off writing until the night before the theme is due—and, alas, this is the favorite time for most of us—there is no time left for repentance.

G. THE WAY TO WRITE

The first draft should be written, if possible, at a single sitting and at a time when we can be most free from interruptions. Writing of any sort involves the process of creation, and creation requires a sustained mood. This mood, as has been pointed out, often refuses to descend upon us without determined invocation on our part. Often we must exert severe mental discipline and a high degree of concentration before the material in our outline is synthesized in our minds and we feel that we are ready to begin to write. Most writers, especially beginners, are prone to begin before they have absorbed the general flavor of their subject. In consequence, they often find the tone of their composition changing under their hands; they may at the outset be light and facetious, only to find themselves gradually becoming heavy-handed and pedantic. If they had been content to wait the necessary amount of time to feel their way into their material, they might have saved themselves the spottiness which results from changes of tone.

Frequently, if the material will not synthesize itself within a reasonable time, the best procedure is to pretend to run away from the problem altogether. Themes are whimsical animals, not unlike opossums in many respects; they pretend to be dead, whereas in reality they are only teasing us. If we walk away from them in assumed indifference, they quite often exhibit a remarkable vitality. One student relates the story of how he once walked away from a recalcitrant theme. He thought about his subject, but could not make a beginning. So he put on his hat and walked down to the corner drug store, forgetting for the moment that he had a care in the world. On his return he walked upstairs and, as he touched the handle of the door to his room, something seemed to "click" (as he described it) in his mind. He walked to his desk, seized his pencil, and wrote out the first draft in half an hour. He revised it the next morning, and was rewarded with an "A" for what seemed to be his lack of pains! But his success was not due to "inspiration." The material for the theme was already in his mind, but for some reason, such as fatigue or self-consciousness, he could not make a beginning.

Some of us write slowly, others rapidly. Joseph Conrad used to spend hours upon a single paragraph; he felt that he could not go on until what he had written suited him exactly. Persons of a different temperament prefer to write rapidly, revising afterward. This latter method is often preferable, especially for the student who is bothered by technical questions of grammar, syntax, punctuation, and the like. The mind, while busily engaged with an idea, seldom likes to be interrupted by other matters; a careful revision, at a later time, can take care of these details after the idea has been completely written out in rough form.

We shall not at this time go into questions concerning that obscure quality called "style"; but a word of general advice might not be amiss. We should write simply and without affectation. That is not to say that we should write clumsily or carelessly; but we should not try to lash ourselves into an emotional frenzy. We should remember that we are not making a political speech to adults who have the minds of children; we are supposedly addressing readers who, like ourselves, are not deluded by rhetorical flourishes. Enthusiasm for our subject we must have, but let it be held in leash. Flowery language will not promote, but will retard, the expression of our ideas. The great literature of the world is the simple literature, which has sprung from deep feeling and honest conviction, not from tricks of style or from a forced show of animation or emotion.

Only after the first draft has been allowed to cool can we undertake an intelligent and dispassionate revision. And such a revision is as important as the first draft. There are no rules to follow; each of us can best form his own habits of work. One effective method, followed by the novelist Dorothy Canfield, is to concentrate on one type of error at a time—grammar, punctuation, diction, paragraphing, transitions, and so on. Each of us has his own weaknesses and, having discovered them, can best decide for himself what errors he is prone to make, and can concentrate special attention upon them. This type of revision consumes less time than trying to look for all our mistakes in one reading. And, needless to say, it is more thorough.

H. TRANSITIONS

The problem of transitions has not yet been discussed because it is closely connected with the process of revision. Transitions are bridges which enable the reader to step easily from sentence to sentence, and from paragraph to paragraph.

At this point in our study we shall consider only the transitions between paragraphs, saving for the next chapter the problem of transitions between sentences.

A reader, progressing from paragraph to paragraph of a composition, is not unlike Liza crossing the ice; the cakes of ice are paragraphs, and it is our duty as writers to facilitate that crossing by placing the paragraphs so that the reader does not fall between them.

Ideas that are arranged in logical order, following an intelligently constructed outline, ought to constitute a logical thought progression without the aid of any transitional devices. The very forward-movement of our thoughts should be enough to guide the reader through our ideas. But as a practical matter transitional devices are frequently necessary in order to make assurance doubly sure. We should constantly remember, however, that these devices are not *substitutes* for a smooth progression of thought, but merely mechanical *aids*.

These transitional devices may be classified as follows:

1. Repetition of a word or phrase. Although unintentional and careless repetition can mar a piece of writing, judicious repetition can often be effective in linking sentence to sentence or paragraph to paragraph. As we shall see later, when we come to the study of the paragraph, it is often possible to select a "key-word" which will summarize or embody the thought of our paragraph. As we pass from this step in our thinking to the next, we may often aid the reader by repeating this key-word in the following paragraph, in order to show the relationship between the two ideas. In the following paragraphs the author has effectively used this device (the key-words are printed in capital letters):

> But as time went on and wealth increased and religion decayed, as American life was progressively secularized, this original PURPOSE of the colleges has naturally faded for the most part out of view. It has become incidental everywhere and in most institutions obsolete, and other PURPOSES have taken its place.
>
> Unfortunately these newer PURPOSES have never been formulated with any such definiteness and clarity as the original conception attained. We have had many formulations from individual educators, and several collective and official pronouncements from faculties, as to what the PURPOSE, or PURPOSES, of the present arts college *ought* to be, but very little ANALYSIS of what the objects actually are in the unexpressive mind of the community which maintains the colleges by supplying them with funds and students.
>
> Such an ANALYSIS I am about to attempt. . . .[6]

2. The use of reference words. Often, when repetition is not advisable, we may directly refer to the thought or key-word of the preceding paragraph. Three general types of reference devices exist: summarizing words or expressions, synonyms, and pronouns.

a. Summarizing words or expressions. These, as their name implies, are usually broad, inclusive words or phrases which conveniently sum up a preceding thought. In the following introductory sentences of paragraphs, the italicized words obviously refer to such a preceding thought, and thus help to bridge the gap between the two paragraphs:

"To many of our scholars and practical men of affairs, *this economic view of liberty* has made strong appeal." [7]

"*The distinction which I have in mind* is clearly suggested if we place side by side two familiar provisions of the Constitution." [8]

"Expressions and applications of *this outlook* abound on every hand." [9]

"*Another vastly significant case in point* is the typical business man's attitude toward wages." [10]

b. Synonyms. These are useful as transitional devices when for any reason we do not wish to repeat a word which appears in a preceding paragraph. In the following passage, for example,

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[6] Max McConn, "What Is the College For?" from *College or Kindergarten?* New York: The New Republic, 1928. L. & C., p. 144.

[7] Alexander Meiklejohn, "Liberty—for What?" from *Harper's Magazine*, August, 1935. L. & C., p. 217.

[8] *Ibid.*, L. & C., p. 213.

[9] Henry Pratt Fairchild, "Exit the Gospel of Work," from *Harper's Magazine*, April, 1931. L. & C., p. 175.

[10] *Ibid.*, L. & C., p. 175.

Huxley centers his reader's attention in the first paragraph on the story of "Jack and the Bean-stalk." He desires to use Jack as a transitional device leading to his second paragraph, but since he is using the story as an analogy to lead the reader into a daring exploration of scientific thought, he wishes to emphasize the idea of Jack as an *adventurer*. Hence the repetition of the words "Jack" or "hero" would not have been as effective as the synonym *adventurer*. All references to Jack have been printed in capital letters.

> There is a delightful child's story, known by the title of "JACK and the Bean-stalk," with which my contemporaries who are present will be familiar. But so many of our grave and reverend juniors have been brought up on severer intellectual diet, and, perhaps, have become acquainted with fairy-land only through primers of comparative mythology, that it may be needful to give an outline of the tale. It is a legend of a bean-plant, which grows and grows until it reaches the high heavens and there spreads out into a vast canopy of foliage. The HERO, being moved to climb the stalk, discovers that the leafy expanse supports a world composed of the same elements as that below, but yet strangely new; and HIS adventures there, on which I may not dwell, must have completely changed HIS views of the nature of things; though the story, not having been composed by, or for, philosophers, has nothing to say about views.
>
> My present enterprise has a certain analogy to that of the DARING ADVENTURER. I beg you to accompany me in an attempt to reach a world which, to many, is probably strange, by the help of a bean.[11]

c. Pronouns. Pronouns often serve as linking devices, but we should take care that they refer unambiguously to a definite antecedent in the preceding sentence. In the following excerpts both the antecedent and the pronoun have been printed in capitals:

> . . . The methods of private industrialism and capitalism in the present era of machine power, with concentration of ownership, have, in fact, completely transgressed the canons of the good life, and the AMERICAN PEOPLE have shown, in THEIR birth rate, that THEY no longer are confident about life under the present terms.
>
> By THEIR votes in 1932 and 1934, and by the tremendous, silent, and continuous pressure upon the Administration and THEIR representatives in the Congress, THEY have also shown THEIR determination to change those terms so that THEY may have life and have it more abundantly.[12]

> . . . To chart the course of this recurrent ethical struggle, to judge its direction and force, is extremely difficult. Each of us ought to do it for him-

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[11] Thomas Henry Huxley, *Evolution and Ethics*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. L. & C., p. 287.

[12] Rexford G. Tugwell, "The Progressive Tradition," from the *Atlantic Monthly*, April, 1935. L. & C., p. 225.

self, I suppose; and I have reached at least a few BEARINGS in which for myself there is some satisfaction.

One of THESE suggests a characteristic invincible determination to get the necessary thing done regardless of the cost. . . .[13]

3. Transitional words or phrases. These linking devices, which are frequently used, should be employed with care and exactness. In the following list some of the most common of them have been roughly classified, but few of them, it must be noted, are synonyms:

Progression: it follows that, of course, as (in consequence), because, moreover, hence, therefore, on that account, for that reason, furthermore, in the first place, in the next place, further.

Contrast: on the one hand . . . on the other hand, but, yet, still, nevertheless, nonetheless, however, to be sure, on the contrary, on the other hand, instead, inversely, conversely, notwithstanding.

Similarity: in a like manner, in similar manner, similarly, likewise, by the same token.

Illustration: just as, in connection with, incidentally, all things considered, therefore, thus it follows, as you will see, for example.

Conclusion: finally, briefly, as the matter stands, nevertheless, at all events, at any rate, even so, after all, such being the case, accordingly, that being so.

Time: in the meantime, thereafter, thereupon, forthwith, immediately, subsequently, afterwards, next, eventually, at the same time, meanwhile, hereupon, whereupon, then.

Emphasis: in any event, in fact, besides, moreover, likewise, and also, too, indeed.

4. Transitional sentences. Transitional sentences often appear at the end or at the beginning of a paragraph. Such sentences are frequently employed when the writer desires a clearer or more emphatic transition than he could effect by any of the devices which we have studied.

In the following excerpts, the concluding sentence of the first paragraph paves the way for the thought of the second:

. . . At last the journey was accomplished; slowly, one by one, living or dying, the wounded were carried up into the hospital. *And in the hospital what did they find?*

"Lasciate ogni speranza voi ch'entrate": [14] the delusive doors bore no such inscription; and yet behind them Hell yawned. Want, neglect, confusion,

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[13] *Ibid.*, L. & C., p. 226.

[14] This quotation appears in italics in the original.

> misery—in every shape and in every degree of intensity—filled the endless corridors and the vast apartments of the gigantic barrack-house, which, without forethought or preparation, had been hurriedly set aside as the chief shelter for the victims of the war.[15]

> The college is an institution, and like every other institution has been established and is maintained by society to accomplish some result which in the view of the social group, or some considerable part of the group, is held to be necessary or advantageous. *We must inquire what this result is which the community seeks from the college.*
>
> Perhaps I shall put my meaning across more quickly by taking some analogous institution as an example. . . .[16]

In the following excerpts the introductory sentence of the second paragraph points backward to the thought of the first:

> "Oh, yes," the reader may say, "I know what comes next. He will dismiss the first two with a few elaborate academic sarcasms and maintain that only the culture purpose is worthy of consideration."
>
> *A quite natural suspicion!* But the reader will be mistaken in this case.[17]

> . . . It is tremendous, heroic, this well-nigh universal aspiration of the lower economic classes in this county to set their children's feet on the road to that success which they in their own lives have missed; SUCCESS meaning, concretely, money, and the pleasures, security, and prestige which money brings. To this end they are willing to deprive themselves of the few pleasures and the little security they might otherwise enjoy in their own persons.
>
> *A base materialistic aspiration?* Materialistic, perhaps; but I will not agree to BASE. . . .[18]

5. Inversion. To make any of the foregoing transitional devices more apparent, we may often invert a sentence so that these devices may link ideas more effectively.

Let us suppose that an author has been dwelling on Thomas Hardy's ability to delineate character. The writer next desires to point out that this ability is one of the chief differences that distinguish Hardy from his peers. His paragraph might commence as follows:

> We become most conscious of the profound differences that distinguish him from his peers when we consider Hardy's power of creating men and women.

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[15] Lytton Strachey, "Florence Nightingale," from *Eminent Victorians.* New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1918. L. & C., p. 8.

[16] Max McConn, "What Is the College For?" from *College or Kindergarten?* New York: The New Republic, 1928. L. & C.. p. 147.

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] *Ibid.*

This initial sentence of the paragraph acts as only a weak connecting link. Note how this link is strengthened when the sentence is inverted so as to place the idea of "Hardy's power of creating men and women" in close juxtaposition to the idea of the preceding paragraph—his ability to delineate character:

> And it is when we are considering Hardy's power of creating men and women that we become conscious of the profound differences that distinguish him from his peers. [The remainder of the paragraph is devoted to a discussion of these "profound differences."] [19]—VIRGINIA WOOLF

I. BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

It is difficult to make a beginning. Even though we may have on paper before us an outline of what we wish to say, we hesitate, like swimmers on the bank of a mountain pool, fearing to take the first plunge. Uncertainty begets further uncertainty; the longer we wait, the more confused and muddled we become. Who has not had the experience of staring blindly at a clean sheet of paper and feeling almost physically inhibited from writing the first word?

Confronted with a psychological barrier of this sort, we may well take a hint from the athlete, who never fails to "warm up" before entering any contest. His need for limbering up his muscles is no less than the writer's for putting his mind in working order and establishing a physical coördination between his fingers and his brain.

Someone has said that the best way to begin is to begin. A beginning of some sort, even if it be a poor one, is valuable in that it helps to establish a coördination between our mind and our muscles. Even if our writing be labored and clumsy at first, we find that soon our thoughts flow more freely, that our fingers move more nimbly. We warm up just as truly as does the athlete. In revising, of course, much that we have written will be discarded; but our first labored paragraphs have served their purpose. By the time we have completed our first draft we shall probably have little difficulty in going back and writing the introduction.

From among all the various types of introductions we can distinguish at least two: that which excites our curiosity, interest, or imagination; and that which plunges directly into the subject without any formalities. Between these two extremes, of course, there are endless variations. Which type to choose depends on several factors—the personality of the writer, the nature of the subject, and the type of reader to whom we wish to make an appeal. A paper on a scientific subject written solely to convey information does not require a beginning calculated to charm or amuse the prospective reader. Magazine articles, essays, and narratives, on the other hand, partially depend for their effect upon their capacity to arouse interest from the very outset. This capacity to create and sustain interest should characterize the compositions written by students.

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[19] "The Novels of Thomas Hardy," from *The Common Reader, Second Series.* New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1932. L. & C., p. 117.

A writer who sets out to win his reader by a trite remark is as boring as the dinner partner who attempts to lead off conversation with a remark about the weather. But perhaps even more intolerable is the writer or conversationalist who, with a forced show of animation, makes an elephantine attempt to be coy or kittenish. "The great thing is to be natural" is a much quoted saying, but it is emphatically true. The writer who strives too hard to make an effect is almost sure to achieve artificiality.

Edith Wharton, offering advice to writers, has recalled the story told by Benvenuto Cellini of his boyhood. One night, while he and his father were sitting together, they saw a salamander in the fire; whereupon the father boxed young Benvenuto's ear. To his surprised son the father explained that a salamander was a very unusual sight, and that he wanted to make certain that Benvenuto would remember the experience. The writer, too, must box his reader's ears—but only provided that, first, he has something worth the reader's consideration, and second, that he avoids a labored and artificial gesture.

Reprinted below are the opening lines of several essays, selected at random. The student could with profit continue the investigation in any good magazine, volume of essays, or anthology.

> How few people there are who are fair in their attitude toward patent medicines. Almost everybody takes them, but scarcely anybody speaks of them without derision.[20]

> Among the most remarkable people I have never met is the family that has moved out of the apartment we are going to rent.[21]

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[20] Robert Lynd, "In Defence of Patent Medicines," from *The Peal of Bells.* New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1925.

[21] Simeon Strunsky, "Real People," from *Post Impressions.* New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1914.

> Lying in bed would be an altogether perfect and supreme experience if only one had a colored pencil long enough to draw on the ceiling.[22]

> The house in which I live is haunted by the noise of dripping water.[23]

> I anchored the glass-bottomed diving-boat as close to the cliffs of northern Narborough as I dared, in a cove where the water was so deep that the swells remained unbroken until shattered against the lava itself.[24]

> Several years ago a young man came into my study with a manuscript which he wished me to criticize.
> "It is only a little bit of my work," he said modestly, "and it will not take you long to look it over. In fact it is only the first chapter, in which I explain the Universe."[25]

Endings do not present the same problems as beginnings—in fact, quite the reverse. For although it is often difficult for us to commence writing, it is sometimes even more difficult to stop. Once having established "the flow," we are loath to turn off the faucet. This inability to know when to stop usually springs from one of two causes, sometimes from both: once warmed to our subject, either we tend to exceed the scope of our original plan, or we feel compelled to ring down the curtain with a rhetorical flourish. Both temptations present pitfalls which we would do well to avoid. While a departure from our outline is sometimes advisable if, while writing, we light upon some valuable afterthought, we should consider carefully how such a change would affect our original plan as represented by our theme-sentence and outline.

The second temptation is even more insidious. Most of us have a natural desire to "finish strong"; we tend to pattern the endings of our compositions after the flourish of trumpets and the crash of cymbals that used to climax the typical vaudeville turn. The result is usually the reverse of what we expect; our emotion, whether real or synthetic, is apt to betray us into a style of writing which is vaporous, trite, or lacking in good taste.

One final piece of advice regarding beginnings and endings: scrutinize each first draft carefully to discover whether the composition will not be better for sacrificing the first and last paragraphs.

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[22] G. K. Chesterton, "On Lying in Bed," from *Tremendous Trifles*. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1909.

[23] Aldous Huxley, "Water Music," from *On the Margin*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1931.

[24] William Beebe, "The Sharks of Narborough," from the *Atlantic Monthly*, October, 1925.

[25] Samuel McChord Crothers, "Every Man's Natural Desire to be Somebody Else," from *The Dame School of Experience*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920.

J. TITLES

A title is to a piece of writing what a sign or a window display is to a store. The passer-by stops to look—or goes his way.

Students, relying on the fact that their themes will be read in any event, seldom try to arouse interest by choosing an attractive or interesting title. They either omit the title or put down the first words that come into their heads. They do not remember that instructors are human beings themselves, who, because of the nature of their work, possess an almost abnormal desire to be entertained.

Turning over the pages of a magazine or volume of essays in search of interesting reading material, almost any one of us would be tempted to investigate subjects with titles like these: "On Unanswering Letters," "On Running after One's Hat," "To Be Read Only by Stupid Serious Persons," "Let Us Talk about Unpleasant Things," "The Danger of Being a Gentleman," "Objections to Laughter," "The Unintentional Charm of Men," "The Importance of Doing Nothing Badly," "Mother Goose-Step for Children," or "Death-Bed Manners."

EXERCISES

Exercise 1. The Outline. Outline an essay, article, or editorial selected by you or your instructor.

Exercise 2. Transitions. In some essay you have read, be prepared to point out and classify the devices employed by the author to effect transitions between paragraphs.

Exercise 3. Titles. From a volume of essays or an anthology select and list what you believe to be the ten most interesting titles.

Exercise 4. Introductions. Select and copy the introductions to five of the best essays, articles, or editorials that you have read.

K. A STUDENT THEME

NOTE

The following fifty-minute impromptu theme was written by a freshman during his first week at the University of Michigan.[26] It has been transcribed here *uncorrected,* just as it came from the writer. It is not presented as a model of excellent writing, but as an example of good organization.

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[26] This theme and the analysis on p. 27, together with the theme on p. 29, have been reprinted through the kind permission of Professors Clarence D. Thorpe, Erich A. Walter, and Earl Leslie Griggs, members of the Michigan Committee on the Articulation of High School and College English. See *Preparation for College English,* University of Michigan Official Publication, Vol. XXXVII, No. 58. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1935.

This theme, together with twelve others, was read by a group of twelve instructors in the English Department of the University of Michigan. Each instructor turned in his independent rating, with analytical comments upon the quality of each theme. Subsequently a committee of the English Department of the University prepared ratings and analyses for each theme. The theme reprinted below was rated "Acceptable +" as an indication that it fell just short of the highest rating, "Excellent."

The committee's analytical comment is reprinted at the end of the theme, on page 27.

The outline on p. 28 (not written by the student) will show that the theme was logically organized. This outline exemplifies the type of organization that can be expected of a superior student on an impromptu theme.

MAGELLAN AND ECKENER

Today we are living in an astoundingly experimental age. No idea is even considered unless it possesses qualities of a highly revolutionary nature. May I ask you to contrast this present condition with that of another century?

The sixteenth century, which I wish to use as comparison, is well known to students of history. Startling discoveries were made, new ideas were presented, Man and his mind were doing strange things to old conventions and beliefs. These new discoveries and ideas were not readily accepted however. People still retained their old beliefs and superstitions; they lived as a general rule, narrow and unenlightened lives. They traveled little and heard much. These tales were circulated from mouth to mouth, and though they might have been innocent enough at the first telling, they grew to such amazing proportions that, as a result, everyone was frightened into living in the past.

But there were a few left entirely unimpressed by such weird imaginings, who dared to look into the future. We owe our basic knowledge to these free men who defied convention, who gave their names as godfathers of science and invention willingly and without condition.

History reverences the name of a discoverer of this period—Magellan. He it was who proved to the world the absolute correctness of Colubmus' theory. He started out with a few small sailing vessels upon on epochmaking voyage. Little did he realize the colossal significance of his undertaking. Magellan gave his life to discovery in order that the world might have certain proof that the earth was round.

There is a man, living in this century, in this very generation, who has many of the same unselfish qualities as this old-world explorer. He has just completed a similar feat of bravery and daring. I dare say you have already decided whom the man is. He is that famous German, Dr. Hugo Eckener, who has just completed a cruize around the world via the air. It will have the same important effect upon air history as Magellans voyage did upon discovery and theory.

The conditions of the two voyages are perhaps as different from one another as the men are similar to one another. Dr. Eckener had every convience of modern science at his fingertips, Magellan had only a few crude instruments. The Graf Zeppelin is the latest and safest in air craft, Magellans ships were neither sea worthy, safe nor comfortable. One went by air the other by water. I cannot quote the exact duration of each voyage—but hours were consequence to Eckener while Magellan counted weeks and months.

However the men are unquestionably similar. Both of them incirceled the globe—one to prove a theory, the other to establish air history. Both men possess the same faultless qualities; daring, bravery, determination, consentration, sacrafice, and last, that ability to see an undertaking thorough.

New thought is current today. We have every advantage and opportunity to live broad, intelegent lives. This opportunity was given to us by such history makers as Magellan and Eckener—men who have given up everything that we might find the world better, fuller and more interesting. May we profit by these sacrifices and cherish the name of every man and woman who has helped to make this world what it is today!

ANALYSIS BY THE COMMITTEE

In spite of its rhetorical flourishes, its weak proofreading, and its stressing of the obvious, this is a thoroughly acceptable paper. It is a substantial piece of work for a fifty-minute impromptu. . . . The writer of this paper has learned to organize his ideas, to follow his thought through to definite ends. He shows control of historical facts and sees the relation of one fact to another. It is satisfying to observe his alignment of related ideas and the presentation of the ideas persuasively in a climactic order. He has deliberately tried to vary the sentence structure and has succeeded to a marked degree. He has been well taught.

The most obvious faults of this composition are the spelling and punctuation. Proofing of the manuscript is admittedly bad and may well have been the result of lack of time. These errors are regrettable, but the intelligence shown here indicates the kind of student who, once told, does not forget. With further training in diction, phrasing, and mechanics he should develop quickly.

L. OUTLINE OF A STUDENT THEME

MAGELLAN AND ECKENER

THEME SENTENCE: *We should profit by the sacrifices of such history makers as Magellan and Eckener, who have given up everything that we might find the world better, fuller, and more interesting.*

I. Proposed contrast between the present experimental age and the sixteenth century

II. The sixteenth century
  - A. An age of startling discoveries
  - B. Also an age of superstition
  - C. The few pioneers who defied superstition
    - x. Magellan
      1. His proof of Columbus' theory
      2. His failure to realize the significance of his undertaking
      3. His sacrifice to prove the earth round

III. The modern counterpart of Magellan—Dr. Hugo Eckener
  - A. His unselfish qualities compared to Magellan's
  - B. His recent feat
  - C. Its effect on air history comparable to that of Magellan's voyage

IV. Difference between the conditions of the two voyages
  - A. Conveniences of science
  - B. Safety
  - C. Time

V. Similarity between the two men
  - A. Similarity of achievements—circling the globe
    1. Magellan's purpose: to prove a theory
    2. Eckener's purpose: to establish air history
  - B. Similarity of character

VI. Our duty today: to profit by the opportunities which the sacrifices of such men have provided (Theme sentence)

Exercise 5. Outlining

The following theme, like the one reprinted on p. 26, was written by a freshman at the University of Michigan and was rated by the committee "Not Acceptable." In its analysis of the theme, the committee, commenting on the organization of the material, stated that the theme "rambled here and there without arriving at any particular goal."

After having read the theme carefully, frame a theme sentence and construct a logical outline which will incorporate the writer's chief relevant ideas. In making the outline arrange the material in its most logical and effective order.

CALM, PEACEFUL LIVING

It is undoubtedly true that a calm peaceful life is more attractive to many people than a life of activity and association. There are certain attractions to this nature of living which appeal to various types. The results of peaceful living vary proportionally to the different reasons why people chose to keep themselves in accordance with the rules of a calm, quiet, devoted life.

First among the attractions is the quiet restfulness which the very natures of some people demand. Unless they find this they are unable to be happy.

Another reason is that an opportunity is afforded for thinking and observing life. There is no other place from which life can be observed better than from the retirement of undisturbed solitude. Rather than taking an active part, a person can observe.

People who have a definite mission to fulfil in life can better do their work alone, and study their personal problems without interference.

If one is devoted to art, probably by your artistic temperament demands a life which is removed away from the harshness and difficulty of the ordinary worldly activity.

The type of person likely to chose this nature of living includes thinkers, scholars, and artists who require the proper atmosphere in which to carry on their work.

The results of living a removed life include an observation of life which is not prejudiced or distorted.

If the person who has chosen this life for its advantages in studying and solving a problem, it is probable that he will fulfil this mission. They have had ample time in which to medidate, study, and come to a conclusion with the facts their study has discovered.

Life "far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife" is attractive because it provides a condition of restfulness which enables thinkers, observers, and artistic to carry on their work undisturbed, and to fulfil their mission. After leading such a life, it is very probable that their problems will be solved, their missions fulfilled, and their observation clear and correct.

CHAPTER II

THE PARAGRAPH

A. THE THEORY OF THE PARAGRAPH

A COMPOSITION is like a central post office in a large city where mail from all parts of the world, addressed to that particular locality, is received. Here it is sorted and distributed to substations in various parts of the city. Letters which have been misaddressed are returned to the sender, forwarded, or sent to the dead letter office. But the majority of them find their way into postmen's bags or letter boxes and arrive at their ultimate destinations.

When we set out to write, we collect ideas, like letters, from every available source. As we have seen in the previous chapter, we then go through the process of sorting them and classifying them under general headings which might be compared to post-office substations. During this process we find that some of these ideas are irrelevant or unsuited to our immediate purpose; these we send to the dead letter office or forward to our files for possible future reference. The remainder we group in a logical order, pigeonholing them under topics and subtopics which resemble the letter boxes and lock-drawers of a substation.

These boxes and drawers we may liken to the paragraphs of our composition. A paragraph is a unit of thought composed of closely related ideas. Unlike letter boxes, our paragraphs may differ greatly in size, shape, and importance; in fact, so heterogeneous are their functions and so various their structures that any attempt to classify them minutely or to give rules for their precise construction would in a large measure defeat its own ends. The very nature of paragraphs demands that the writer be free to adapt their size, shape, and function to each situation as it arises. If we were to fix rigid rules to govern paragraphs, we should rob them of the very qualities which make them valuable tools for the writer.

As we enter on our study, it would be interesting and helpful to remember that paragraphs have not always existed. They evolved to fit a need. The reality of this need is best appreciated if we try to read an old unparagraphed manuscript. Accustomed as we are today to soundly constructed paragraphs, we should resent having to thread our way through line after line, page after page, where no indentations help mark off the steps in the author's thought. The very set-up of the page would prejudice us into believing that here was very dry reading indeed.

Because paragraphing did not spring into being overnight, present theories are the result of a gradual growth. For many years no definite principles seem to have guided writers; for, while they did mark off into paragraphs the major topics, they were not always consistent, and seemed to be guided more by instinct than by reason. Even as late as the nineteenth century the value of paragraphing was not fully appreciated. In any event it is certain that the paragraphs of the Victorians are radically different from those of contemporary writers. In an age when the long sentence was in vogue, it was only natural that the paragraphs themselves should have been longer. The modern sentence, by comparison, is short and crisp, adapted to the tempo of present-day living and thinking; the modern paragraph has accordingly adjusted itself, and we are not surprised to find a dozen paragraphs where authors like Huxley and Newman would have used only one or two.

Perhaps enough has been said to indicate that the paragraph has always been a plastic device, adapting itself to the needs of the times, the character of the thought of the period, and the style of the individual writer. Nor is there any reason for our believing that today the paragraph has reached the acme of its development and that it should be standardized and hemmed in by rules and formulas. But the very fact that the paragraph has *evolved* implies that certain principles have been at work, guiding and shaping its development. It is our present concern to discover these principles, state them, and use them as a basis for our own individual writing. By studying the work of others more competent than ourselves, we can profit by their experience and vitalize our own thinking and writing.

B. TYPES OF PARAGRAPHS

Before we examine the nature of the paragraph too minutely, it would be well to outline briefly some of the types which we are likely to encounter. These types can be roughly classified, but we should bear constantly in mind two cautions. First, classification of this kind is neither strictly accurate nor exhaustive. Every paragraph cannot always be fitted into a neat little category prepared for it in advance, and frequently a paragraph will be found which represents several of the types we are about to discuss. Second, any classification is a means to an end, not an end in itself. Enumerating the chief types of paragraphs may help us in understanding what a paragraph is and what it does, but this analysis should not cramp our freedom by causing us to compose paragraphs according to stereotyped models.

1. **The narrative paragraph.** As its name implies, the narrative paragraph deals with a succession of actions or events. Of all the types it is the most elastic and the least guided by the principle of unity. Within the paragraph the writer may include, if he desires, a comparatively long series of events; or he may find it advisable, in order to achieve clarity or increase suspense, to break the action up into a series of shorter units. In the following passage Stevenson has narrated in detail a series of fast-moving events building to a climax which fittingly closes the paragraph:

Paragraph 1

Denis cast a look around and darted into the porch. There he might escape observation, or—if that were too much to expect—was in a capital posture whether for parley or defence. So thinking, he drew his sword and tried to set his back against the door. To his surprise, it yielded behind his weight; and though he turned in a moment, continued to swing back on oiled and noiseless hinges, until it stood wide open on a black exterior. When things fall out opportunely for the person concerned, he is not apt to be critical about the how or why, his own immediate personal convenience seeming a sufficient reason for the strangest oddities and revolutions in our sublunary things; and so Denis, without a moment's hesitation, stepped within and partly closed the door behind him to conceal his place of refuge. Nothing was further from his thoughts than to close it altogether; but for some inexplicable reason—perhaps by a spring or a weight—the ponderous mass of oak whipped itself out of his fingers and clanked to with a formidable rumble and a noise like the falling of an automatic bar.[1]—ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

[1] "The Sire de Malétroit's Door." L. & C., p. 350.

2. The descriptive paragraph. Although in practice description and narration are frequently intermingled, some paragraphs may be classified as definitely descriptive. In paragraphs of this sort the author usually achieves unity by striking either dominant or contrasting impressions or moods. Sometimes an impression is summed up in a topic sentence; sometimes it is implied. In Paragraph 2 below Stevenson marshals the details so as to concentrate attention on the Sire de Malétroit's two dominant physical characteristics—his face and his hands. In Paragraph 3 Thomas Hardy organizes the contrasting sounds of Egdon Heath around the sentence: "Treble, tenor, and bass notes were to be found therein."

Paragraph 2

On a high chair beside the chimney, and directly facing Denis as he entered, sat a little old gentleman in a fur tippet. He sat with his legs crossed and his hands folded, and a cup of spiced wine stood by his elbow on a bracket on the wall. His countenance had a strongly masculine cast; not properly human, but such as we see in the bull, the goat, or the domestic boar; something equivocal and wheedling, something greedy, brutal, and dangerous. The upper lip was inordinately full, as though swollen by a blow or a toothache; and the smile, the peaked eyebrows, and the small, strong eyes were quaintly and almost comically evil in expression. Beautiful white hair hung straight all round his head, like a saint's, and fell in a single curl upon the tippet. His beard and moustache were the pink of venerable sweetness. Age, probably in consequence of inordinate precautions, had left no mark upon his hands; and the Malétroit hand was famous. It would be difficult to imagine anything at once so fleshy and so delicate in design; the taper, sensual fingers were like those of one of Leonardo's women; the fork of the thumb made a dimpled protuberance when closed; the nails were perfectly shaped, and of a dead, surprising whiteness. It rendered his aspect tenfold more redoubtable, that a man with hands like these should keep them devoutly folded in his lap like a virgin martyr—that a man with so intense and startling an expression of face should sit patiently on his seat and contemplate people with an unwinking stare, like a god, or a god's statue. His quiescence seemed ironical and treacherous, it fitted so poorly with his looks.[2]—Robert Louis Stevenson

Paragraph 3

It might reasonably have been supposed that she was listening to the wind, which rose somewhat as the night advanced, and laid hold of the attention. The wind, indeed, seemed made for the scene, as the scene seemed made for the hour. Part of its tone was quite special; what was heard there could be heard nowhere else. Gusts in innumerable series followed each other from the north-west, and when each one of them raced past the sound of its progress resolved into three. Treble, tenor, and bass notes were to be found therein. The general ricochet of the whole over pits and prominences had the gravest pitch of the chime. Next there could be heard the baritone buzz of a holly tree. Below these in force, above them in pitch, a dwindled voice strove hard at a husky tune, which was the peculiar local sound alluded to. Thinner and less immediately traceable than the other two, it was far more impressive than either. In it lay what may be called the linguistic peculiarity of the heath; and being audible nowhere on earth off a heath, it afforded a shadow of reason for the woman's tenseness, which continued as unbroken as ever.[3] —THOMAS HARDY

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[2] *Ibid.*, p. 351.

3. The introductory paragraph. The opening paragraph is usually the reader's initiation into a subject. We all recognize that first impressions are important; the reader's whole attitude toward what we have to tell him may be conditioned by our first overtures.

We have already discussed the question of "reader strategy" in connection with beginnings and endings.[4] We have seen that the tone of the introduction is determined by our motive in writing, whether our aim is to entertain, inform, persuade, or affect the reader emotionally, or a combination of any of these objectives. This tone is also influenced by our feeling toward what we write, whether we are serious, facetious, or ironic. These two factors, then—how we wish to affect the reader and how we ourselves feel toward our material—will set the tone of our introductory paragraph. Beyond the fact that it should be unified in tone and subject matter, no restrictions should be placed upon it.

The three following paragraphs are adapted to the tone which the respective authors wish to set. In the first, the author is entering upon an ironic "debunking" of the classics; in the second, he wishes to present facts in a straightforward manner; in the third, he prefaces the statement of his theme (given in the last sentence) with a graphic and pictorial statement of the problem which he is about to discuss.

Paragraph 4

The following discussion is of course only of interest to scholars. But, as the public school returns show that in the United States there are now over a million colored scholars alone, the appeal is wide enough.[5]—STEPHEN LEACOCK

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[3] *The Return of the Native.* L. & C., p. 829.

[4] See p. 9.

[5] "Homer and Humbug," from *Behind the Beyond.* New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1913.

Paragraph 5

As the head of the Department of Commerce, and thus charged[6] with such responsibility for our game fisheries as weighs upon the mind of the Federal Government, I wish to state a fact, to observe a condition, to relate an experience, to define a proposition, to offer a protest, and to give the reasons for all.[7]—Herbert Hoover

Paragraph 6

Four or five milk wagons break the stillness of the early morning hours rattling over the same streets. Four or five solicitors compete for business in the same block, and offer rival bribes to the apartment house superintendents. In this competition there is no benefit to the quality of milk; that is dependent on the honest enforcement of the law. There is not even an effort to reduce prices; they are fixed by open or tacit agreement by the two or three companies which dominate the situation. For this waste the consumer pays.[8]—Norman Thomas

4. The summarizing paragraph. A summary may occur at any point in the composition. Sometimes, before the writer goes further in his discussion, he wishes to recapitulate the points he has already made. More commonly, however, especially in a short paper, the summary comes in the concluding paragraph. Frequently no summary is necessary at all unless the discussion has been intricate or involved, or unless the writer desires to leave his ideas indelibly printed on the reader's mind. Enough has been said in the preceding chapter to indicate that a concluding paragraph written solely as a bombastic or rhetorical flourish is to be avoided.

The first of the following paragraphs represents a summary occurring in the middle of an article; the second is a concluding paragraph:

Paragraph 7

So far I have tried to make it clear—as the first vital necessity—that the exclusive purpose of the Real College, the Scholar's College must be—to use the old-fashioned word again—culture. The bread-and-butter purpose must there be held in abeyance for the time being, and the superkindergarten purpose must be flatly denied and excluded.[9]—Max McConn

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[6] The student will be gratified to discover that even a President of the United States is not above making a mistake in parallelism. (See pp. 188-189.)

[7] "In Praise of Izaak Walton," from the *Atlantic Monthly,* June, 1927.

[8] *Human Exploitation.* New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co. L. & C., p. 199, 1935.

[9] "What Is the College For?" from *College or Kindergarten?* New York: The New Republic, Inc., 1928. L. & C., p. 155.

Paragraph 8

If you think that I have been passing moral judgments, I have completely failed in writing this article. Questionable morals as reflected in graft, peculation, and legal crime lie quite outside the discussion. Such behavior has been found in every civilization since Mesopotamia; whether the ratio is worse in civilized America I do not know, and for the moment I do not care. Owing to the colossal temptations for graft inspired by prohibition, it may well be worse at the present writing; but this, we trust, is a temporary phenomenon. All that I have tried to say is that you and I, and Americans generally, have each a personal standard of honorable conduct. Under prevailing conditions, largely economic, it is frequently impossible to live within striking distance of that standard. Dr. Paul S. Achilles of Columbia, professor of vocational psychology, estimates that over fifty percent of Americans are not happy in their work. (The suicide rate per thousand has jumped fivefold in seventy years.) I am but pointing out a major reason for that unhappiness. There is better stuff in us than we are permitted to express, and callous as routine may have made us, the failure of self-expression still hurts. In the end nothing but a greater margin of economic security—the rock which stiffened the backbone of the pioneer—can bring release.[10]—STUART CHASE

5. The transitional paragraph. In reading we need an auxiliary step, such as porters place at the entrance to a Pullman, to save us the inconvenience of stretching our mental legs as we pass from one idea to the next. For ordinary purposes the simpler transitional devices which we shall consider later are sufficient; occasionally, in the interests of clearness, a whole paragraph is employed.

Since the transitional paragraph, because of its inherent nature, acts as a step *from* one point *to* another, it is likely to face in two directions: backward to the step which the reader has just taken, and forward to the one which he is about to attempt. This dual nature is illustrated in the passage below, where the second paragraph serves as a step between the first and third:

Paragraph 9

When Colonel Roosevelt said, at the time of the *Lusitania* disaster, that President Wilson should show the attitude of America by "deeds" and not by "weasel words," he touched upon a department of rhetoric to which little or no attention has been given either by students of the subject or by the general public.

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[10] "The Luxury of Integrity," from *Harper's Magazine,* August, 1930. Reprinted in *The Nemesis of American Business.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931.

What are "weasel words"? Roosevelt himself, like all successful orators, knew well enough what they were, and it will pay the rest of us to know more about them.

We live today, as men never lived before, in an age of words, of propaganda, of advertising and of radio oratory. Our opinions and actions are largely determined by the *words* we read or by the *words* uttered by public men. It would seem, therefore, that scarcely anything could be of greater importance than that we should know the exact meanings of the words which our leaders use. Yet the subtle implications, good or bad, conveyed by many of our commonest words through the power of associated ideas, have escaped attention. These words imply a little more than they actually state; they are both true and false in a single breath.[11]—FREDERICK ADAMS WOODS

6. The paragraph in dialogue. The practice of paragraphing dialogue is more or less arbitrary. The modern convention is that the writer should use a new paragraph to indicate a change of speaker. Occasionally a long speech by a single character is broken up into two or more paragraphs when the author feels that thereby he can make the speech clearer or more emphatic.[12]

7. The "thinking" paragraph. We have reserved this type of paragraph until last because it is the most common, the most capable of variation, and hence the most difficult to master. If we can learn to compose good paragraphs of this type, we shall have no difficulty with the other varieties. Hence the principles studied in the remainder of this chapter will apply especially to the "thinking" paragraph.

C. PARAGRAPH UNITY

1. The theory of paragraph unity. The outstanding characteristic of every well-constructed paragraph is its unity. Each thought contained within it has a specific bearing on a larger central topic; each is a fraction which has as its lowest common denominator the main thought of the paragraph. If an idea is not divisible into this denominator, it has no place in the paragraph.

Unity, however, is a relative matter. We have seen in the preceding chapter that a composition must have unity; we shall see, later on in our study of writing, that a sentence, too, must have unity. The unity of the paragraph, while resembling the unity of the composition and of the sentence in quality, naturally differs in degree. A short theme might conceivably comprise only a single

[11] "Oily Words," from the *Century Magazine,* September, 1927.

[12] For the paragraphing and punctuation of dialogue, see pp. 152-154.

paragraph; a paragraph is not infrequently composed of a single sentence. It is for the author to decide how he may best break up his main thought into a convenient series of steps by which the reader may ascend, gradually and without undue exertion, to the desired conclusion. These steps are not always of uniform height; they may be, as we shall see, constructed in a variety of ways; but each in itself must be smooth and level, containing no outcroppings of extraneous material which might cause the reader to stumble.

2. **The topic sentence.** In our study of the whole composition we saw how a theme sentence helped us to achieve unity[13] Since a paragraph is frequently only a miniature composition, the framing of a sentence—called the topic sentence—often helps to maintain unity in the paragraph. Like the theme sentence, it serves as a sentry, to which every thought must give the countersign before it is passed. Each idea, before it is admitted, must meet the challenge and establish its right to enter.

Like a sentry, a topic sentence may be stationed in whatever position the writer deems most strategic. Its post is sometimes at the beginning of the paragraph, sometimes at the end, not infrequently in the middle; occasionally, when the need for clearness is pressing, two are employed to stand guard, one at each end of the paragraph. Sometimes, but very rarely, a writer may leave his paragraph apparently unguarded by a topic sentence; when we look at the paragraph more closely, however, we shall find that the topic sentence is lurking between the lines, cleverly implied in every sentence. This device of implying the topic sentence has its strategic value in that it compels the reader to arrive, seemingly of his own volition, at the conclusion desired by the writer; it is attended by the danger that the writer may not be as clever as he imagines and that the reader will be confused.

The position of the topic sentence depends upon the manner in which the thought of the paragraph is to be developed. If, for example, we wish to make a statement and then prove it, the topic sentence will come first; if the proof is long or involved, we may well desire to restate the topic sentence at the end—though probably in different words. If, on the contrary, we begin our paragraph by stating our evidence on a certain point, the conclusion —in the form of a topic sentence—will be restated at the end. To

[13] See p. 8.

take another situation, we may wish to lead up to our topic sentence in the first part of our paragraph, state it in the middle, and amplify it at the end.

Below will be found paragraphs which illustrate the functions of topic sentences and the positions where they may occur. After reading each paragraph we should try to discover the author's reason for placing the topic sentence where it is. (The topic sentences have been printed in italics.)

a. Topic sentence first:

Paragraph 10

Dramatists have never been able adequately to protect their property. Elizabethan publishers unblushingly practiced the theft of plays from producers with no thought that either apology or explanation was necessary. Sheridan's *The School for Scandal* appeared in print transcribed from an incorrect stenographic copy. George Sand was not annoyed by her own conscience or by fear of public disapproval when she translated *As You Like It* with no one's permission and married Jacques to Celia. The French used to steal their plays from Spain, the English from France, and the Americans from England. In 1871 Thomas Southerne put *Oroonoko* on the stage with no mention of the celebrated Mrs. Aphra Behn.[14]—EUDORA RAMSAY RICHARDSON

b. Topic sentence in the middle:

Paragraph 11

Religion has been a detriment, men have said, to progress. Every revolutionary party in every country has had its hour of crying out that religion has been an anodyne, an opiate, for the suffering people. It has been accused of more wars, perhaps, than any other one cause. It has been called a divisive influence, evil in its general effect upon history. It has been, in short, accused of every evil in its time. *And yet, I rather think that what has done the evil has not been religion at all, but that dead body which men have worshiped.* It was the belief in the dead body which was the opiate. Men worshiping the dead body said drearily, "There is no good thing in life. Life is only sad and grievous, and a thing to be passed through quickly with eyes fixed on some future good." So thinking, they turned their eyes away from present evils, from little children oppressed, from the poor and downtrodden, from every social crime. They turned themselves away even from the joys of life, from glorious life, and called joy evil—incredibly, they did not love life, lest it turn their thoughts away from their hope of heaven.[15]—PEARL BUCK

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[14] "The Ubiquitous Plagiarist," from the *Bookman*, June, 1931.

[15] "What Religion Means to Me," from the *Forum Magazine*, October, 1933. L. & C., p. 301.

Paragraph 12

They appeared to be all persons living in the immediate neighborhood, for they addressed each other familiarly and were conversing about love matters. One of them, however, soon dropped out of the conversation, and edging away from the others stood a little space apart, leaning against the wall on the side of the porch furthest away from me. I began to notice this man very particularly, for it was plain to see that I had excited his interest in an extraordinary manner, and I did not like his scrutiny. *He was, without exception, the most murderous-looking villain I have ever had the misfortune to meet: that was the deliberate opinion I came to before I formed a closer acquaintance with him.* He was a broad-chested, powerful-looking man of medium height, his hands he kept concealed under the large cloth poncho he wore; and he had on a slouch hat that just allowed his eyes to be seen under the rim. They were truculent yellowish-green eyes, that seemed to grow fiery and dim and fiery again by turns, yet never for a single instant were they averted from my face. His black hair hung to his shoulders, and he also had a bristly moustache, which did not conceal his brutal mouth, nor was there any beard to hide his broad swarthy jowl. His jaws were the only part of him that had any motion, while he stood there, still as a bronze statue, watching me. At intervals he ground his teeth, after which he would slap his lips together two or three times, while a slimy froth, most sickening to see, gathered at the corners of his mouth.[16]—W. H. Hudson

c. Topic sentence last:

Paragraph 13

Foreign visitors to this country, especially those from countries where reality has competed successfully with romance, are amused at American men, gray at the temple and thin in the neck, when, asking the whereabouts of their wives, say, "Where are the girls?" and amazed when they hear stately matrons refer to their husbands as "the boys." *The American is reluctant to acknowledge that he has lost his hold on youth; he wants to be playful, and his wife wants to be kittenish.*[17]—Joseph Collins

d. Topic sentences both first and last:

Paragraph 14

With so little room, there seems to be room in England for everybody—room for him to lead his small private life and room to indulge his fancies and voice his opinions. No skyscrapers block his view even in his congested cities. Actually they are not congested. They are full of parks, open spaces, and playing grounds. So, you may say, is Chicago and any city of America with the exception of New York. But look at Hyde Park on a Sunday morning. Notice what goes on there. Walk with me from Hyde Park corner to the Marble Arch, past the fashionable Church Parade, and stand with me in one of the crowds of listeners. Such strange, wild-eyed men these, on their improvised pulpits with banners and queer placards. Communists and diehard conservatives, quack doctors and religious fanatics; and there's a young girl, scarcely more than a child. On her placard was scrawled the words: "Down with the Press." I know her. She's an Oxford undergraduate. She's been suddenly moved to spend her Sunday morning exposing the awful cynicism of the newspaper pens. She's got as big a crowd as anyone, and a fatherly policeman stands beneath her tub, but he isn't needed. The working-men who are listening to her are amused and some are interested but most are bewildered by her language. Still, she's a sporting kid and she's got a right to her opinions, same as anybody, same as all the others. So the crowd stands quiet. It is not excited or excitable. The only excited people are the tub thumpers themselves. The listeners are taking their ease and getting a bit of entertainment and maybe a bit of information. And no one interrupts the speakers. It's one of your rights in England, evidently, to be listened to. You can say whatever you like within the bounds of decency. You can shout "Down with the King" (only you'd lose your crowd) or call the Prime Minister, in polite terms, a blackguard (there you'd score a success). You can attack the Pope, the Churchmen, or the brewers. You can prophesy the end of the world next week or promise anyone the elixir of eternal youth in a bottle. No one will interfere with you. *You've a perfect right to make a fool of yourself if you want to, and the crowd will continue to extend to you its courtesy if you do.*[18]—MARY BORDEN

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[16] *The Purple Land.* New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1916.

[17] "Childish Americans." From *Harper's Magazine,* January, 1926.

e. Topic sentence implied:

Paragraph 15

But perhaps the American commercial farmer has a sufficient market at home to take all his produce. Is there some nationalist program, independent of the foreign trade, which can give him occupation and prosperity? It is a rhetorical question, to which everybody knows the answer, and which public men are not fond of answering.[19]—JOHN CROWE RANSOM

3. The key-word. In addition to the use of a topic sentence, another method of achieving paragraph unity is to employ what we may call a "key-word," which acts as the nucleus for the thought of the paragraph. If such a word is skillfully chosen and manipulated, it may be effectively repeated throughout a succession of sentences. Used in this manner, it performs two functions: it embodies and holds before the reader the central thought, and it also serves as a transitional device between sentences and paragraphs.[20]

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[18] "The Englishman Himself," from *Harper's Magazine,* September, 1931.

[19] "Happy Farmers," from *The American Review,* October, 1933. L. & C., p. 193.

[20] For the use of key-words and transitional devices between paragraphs, see p. 17; between sentences, see pp. 43-44.

This principle of repetition can be applied in various ways. For example, several key-words can be selected, each expressing a phase of the thought of the paragraph, or contrasting aspects of it. Furthermore, synonyms and pronouns can be employed if we feel that actual repetition of the key-word is awkward.

In the following paragraph the author, who has just demonstrated that the principle of liberty in America has destroyed equality, proceeds to show that the same principle has destroyed fraternity also. Note how the two key-words—*fraternity* and *liberty*—are repeated; though the author, for the purpose of varying the repetition, has sometimes substituted synonyms and pronouns, he never allows the two ideas to escape a moment from our attention. To emphasize the key-words, all references to *fraternity* have been printed in italics, all references to LIBERTY in capitals.

Paragraph 16

The expulsion of *fraternity,* on grounds of LIBERTY, has been far less consciously done. We have not argued *brotherhood* away. Rather, under heavy pressure, *it* has drifted out of sight. Few men have spoken against *it,* except perhaps in the form of vague and uneasy deductions from "LIBERTY" as seen in the process of "the survival of the fittest." In fact, the fate of *fraternity* has been very much like that of the Devil in modern Protestant theology. No one has demonstrated *its* non-existence. We have simply ceased to think about *it* seriously. How can we think of *it* if the principle of FREE economic competition holds true? What, in a world defined by THAT PRINCIPLE, can the *Brotherhood of Man* mean? On the docks of San Francisco, in the summer of 1934, who was so silly as to make appeal to *fraternity* as between longshoremen and ship-owners? Are makers of munitions of war called to their trade by the *love of their fellow-men?* Do they play with governments, contrive and scheme for the national murder of peoples because all men are *brothers?* No, *that* is not the theory. The theory of LIBERTY which we are now discussing is very simple. IT is that men are free to seek for profits. Under THAT PRINCIPLE each man is justified in getting what he can, as other men are doing. Our human living is a conflict. Men are not *brothers*. LIBERTY, as we construe IT, has put an end to our *fraternity*. We are "FREE." Therefore *fraternity* is meaningless.[21]—Alexander Meiklejohn

4. Transitions. We have already studied [22] the means by which the writer can facilitate the progress of the reader's thought from paragraph to paragraph: first, the repetition of a word or phrase

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[21] "Liberty—for What?" from *Harper's Magazine,* August, 1935. L. & C., p. 219.

[22] See pp. 17-22.

(a device identical with the use of key-words, which we have just considered); second, the use of reference words (summarizing words or expressions, synonyms, and pronouns); third, transitional words and phrases; fourth, transitional sentences; and fifth, inversion. We have also seen[23] how a paragraph itself may function as a linking device.

The problem of effecting smooth transitions between paragraphs is similar to the question we are now about to consider—transitions between the sentences of the paragraph itself. For it is not enough that a paragraph be composed entirely of ideas that bear on the same thought or that these ideas be arranged in logical order; the relationship among them must be immediately apparent.

While a logical arrangement is the most effective means of securing a smooth progression of orderly thought, writers frequently resort to transitional devices. The writer is like a mason, who first selects his stones with care, trying them in various positions until he obtains the solidity and the artistic effect which he desires; then he adds mortar to set them permanently in their places. Transitional devices, we must remember, are only mortar; they cannot be used to patch up a jerry-built construction.

Although a well-written paragraph will contain examples of many types of transitional devices, we can understand them better if we study them one at a time.

a. Repetition of a word or phrase. In the following passage the key-word of the first paragraph is *work* and of the second, *overproduction.* In the third paragraph, where the two ideas are brought together and contrasted, the repetition of the key-words serves to bind the paragraphs themselves together. References to *work* have been printed in italics, to OVERPRODUCTION in capitals.

Paragraph 17

(1) From time immemorial *work* has been glorified. Song and story yield their homage to the solid merits of *work,* however romantically they may extol the delights of indolence, while essay and biography axiomatically acclaim *work* as the sure means to personal success and social esteem. The more prosaic and academic discussions of contemporary life, in their exaltation of *work* as the great social panacea, do but reëcho the words of Carlyle, who describes it as "the grand cure of all the maladies and miseries that ever beset mankind." The Rotarian mind makes *work* co-equal, if not identical, with service. Nowhere has this doctrine been better summed up than

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[23] See pp. 36-37.

in the words of that past master of pious platitudes, Calvin Coolidge: "To provide for the economic well-being of our inhabitants, only three attributes, which are not beyond the reach of the average person, are necessary—honesty, industry, and thrift." (Oh, if it were only so simple!)

(2) Yet in this year of unemployment, nineteen hundred and thirty-one, the one word that is on every expositor's tongue is "OVERPRODUCTION." It is OVERPRODUCTION that is the cause of the business depression, of unemployment, of the collapse of the stock market, of international friction—industrial OVERPRODUCTION, agricultural OVERPRODUCTION, OVERPRODUCTION of everything in general. Shades of the Classical Economists! What has become of the elaborate argument that they were so learnedly developing scarcely a century ago proving that general OVERPRODUCTION is an impossibility, and which is still the stock in trade of most of the teachers of conventional economics to-day?

(3) Now when you look at it squarely, what is OVERPRODUCTION but the tangible consequence of too much *work?* Here is surely a rare paradox. *Work* the great panacea, OVERPRODUCTION the besetting malady. Yet the characteristic features of the disease are the logical result of the remedy. There must be something wrong with this picture.[24]—Henry Pratt Fairchild

b. Reference words (summarizing words or expressions, synonyms, and pronouns). The paragraph printed below has two key-words—*conflict* and *science.* Note how the two ideas embodied in these words are kept in the forefront of the reader's mind; the author resorts to both repetition and reference words in order to make clear the progress of his thought. References to CONFLICT are printed in capitals, to *science* in italics.

Paragraph 18

A state of CONFLICT between religion and *science* is equally injurious for both. IT brought the *representatives of science* out of the study and laboratory into the market-place; IT taught *them* the arts of the rhetorician and journalist. *Charles Darwin,* one of the truest *men of science* that ever lived, refused to have part or lot in THESE CONTROVERSIES, and deplored that THEY should have troubled the peaceful *world of science.* But *Huxley,*—great *biologist* though he was—was also a born FIGHTER, and joyously assumed the office of *Darwin's* BULLDOG. The BULLDOG is a noble animal—but hardly of the kind best fitted to typify the *scientific temperament. Tyndall, Clifford, and other Rationalists,* were not behind-hand in MILITANCY. The result of CONFLICT was inevitably to create a dogma that became more and more uncompromising for purposes of propaganda, and finally became simple enough to be proclaimed from soap-boxes in Hyde Park.[25]—Esmé Wingfield-Stratford

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[24] "Exit the Gospel of Work," from *Harper's Magazine,* April, 1931. L. & C., p. 173.

[25] *The Victorian Sunset.* New York: William Morrow and Co., 1932.

c. Transitional words and phrases. Transitional words and phrases present two dangers: first, that they will be overused and second, that they will be loosely used. A glance at the list of these words and expressions (see p. 20) will suggest that here is a wide variety of linking devices; the very convenience attached to using them often tempts us to employ them as cheap and easy substitutes for the two methods we have just studied, both of which are used to good effect by careful writers. Then too, we are likely to pick them at random, careless of the subtle distinctions of meaning which differentiate one from the other. When writers do employ them, they select them with care, and to avoid making the mechanics of the transition too apparent, usually do not place them first in a sentence.

Paragraph 19

It is, *however,* the method of teaching rather than of examination that does most to secure that the honors man shall be treated as a case. I spoke just now of the private teaching known in Cambridge as classwork or supervision. I suppose that historically such individual instruction is connected with the origin and development of the office of tutor—those learned in academic history will speak to that. The plan, *at any rate,* is generally known as the tutorial system, and in Cambridge it appears to have been at least revived within the last thirty or forty years. What this really meant was that the colleges were taking over and organizing the work that had previously been done by coaches or private tutors. Now, *at all events,* coaching is regarded as a medicine rather than a food, and the regular teaching provided by the colleges suffices for most men.[26]—GAILLARD LAPSLEY

d. Transitional sentences. Frequently in a paragraph which contains two closely related ideas, transition between them can best be effected by using a linking sentence. In the following paragraph the italicized sentence indicates the point at which the author turns from his consideration of American and Canadian colleges to Oxford.

Paragraph 20

The effect of the comparison is heightened by the peculiar position occupied at Oxford by the professors' lectures. In the colleges of Canada and the United States the lectures are supposed to be a really necessary and useful part of the student's training. Again and again I have heard the graduates of my own college assert that they had got as much, or nearly

[26] "Education in the English Manner," from the *Atlantic Monthly,* October, 1926.

> as much, out of the lectures at college as out of athletics or the Greek letter society or the Banjo and Mandolin Club. In short, with us the lectures form a real part of the college life. *At Oxford it is not so.* The lectures, I understand, are given and may even be taken. But they are quite worthless and are not supposed to have anything much to do with the development of the student's mind. "The lectures here," said a Canadian student to me, "are punk." I appealed to another student to know if this was so. "I don't know whether I'd call them exactly punk," he answered, "but they're certainly rotten." Other judgments were that the lectures were of no importance: that nobody took them: that they don't matter: that you can take them if you like: that they do you no harm.[27]—STEPHEN LEACOCK

e. Inversion. Inversion is the device of rearranging or revising a sentence so that the transitional devices of repetition or reference are placed closer to the preceding sentence.[28]

Let us take as an example two sentences which seem loosely connected:

> The average American is inclined to take himself too seriously. A great deal of unnecessary harm can result from *this attitude.*

By inverting the second sentence and rewording it, we can make more apparent the relationship between the ideas of the two sentences:

> The average American is inclined to take himself too seriously. *This attitude* can cause a great deal of unnecessary harm.

D. FUNCTIONS OF THE "THINKING" PARAGRAPH

We have studied the various types of paragraphs; we have also discovered that, regardless of their type, paragraphs must preserve a unified effect; and we have also studied how this unity may be made apparent by the use of key-words and transitional devices.

Turning our attention now to the "thinking" paragraph—or the paragraph of ideas—let us roughly attempt to classify its functions and study methods by which it can be developed. Let us, however, bear in mind the warning offered at the beginning of this chapter: that the paragraph must be essentially a free agent, circumscribed by no hidebound rules or formulas. True, it is guided by certain principles which we have already mentioned—the necessity for unity, for orderly arrangement, and for smooth transitions; but aside from these principles, no restrictions should be put upon the writer's freedom of thought or imagination. We should also remember that what we shall learn about the "thinking" paragraph may also be applied to the other types which we have discussed. The classifications and examples which we are now to study should serve not as rigid molds into which our ideas must be poured, but rather as a means for stimulating our own initiative in constructing original paragraphs.

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[27] "Oxford as I See It," from *My Discovery of England.* New York: Dodd, Mead & Company.

[28] See p. 21, 1922.

In general we may say that the "thinking" paragraph may perform one or the other of two functions (though sometimes it performs both). First, it may *prove* an idea—that is, it may adduce evidence in support of a point which we seek to establish. Second, it may *clarify* an idea—that is, define, explain, or illustrate it without necessarily attempting to prove it.

1. Paragraphs which prove ideas.

a. The deductive paragraph. Broadly speaking, we think in either of two ways, deductively or inductively. These methods may be best understood by means of examples.

First, let us suppose that our friend has bought a horse. Since we know that every horse has four legs, we deduce that our friend's horse has four legs. Our process of reasoning is called *deduction.*

Deductive thinking requires *analysis*. The word itself is derived from the Latin *de* (away from) + *ducere* (to lead), and the process of deduction, beginning with general conclusions, *moves away* from these toward particulars, from cause to effect. Thus in our example we reasoned from the generalization that all horses have four legs to the conclusion that our friend's horse must also have four legs.

A paragraph which follows the deductive method usually commences with a topic sentence embodying a broad conclusion, and moves toward a particular fact. The writer may have either of two objects in mind: he may wish to prove that his general conclusion is true, adducing the particular facts in support of his contention; or he may be concerned in establishing the particular fact by arguing that it results logically from the rule stated in his generalization. In this event the paragraph will probably contain two topic sentences—the first, the generalization at the beginning, and the second, the particularization at the end.

In the following paragraph the author proves by specific instances that his general statement, embodied in the topic sentence, is true:

Paragraph 21

Philosophers, scholars, and men of science exhibit a common sensitiveness in all decisions in which their AMOUR PROPRE *is involved.* Thousands of argumentative works have been written to vent a grudge. However stately their reasoning, it may be nothing but rationalizing, stimulated by the most commonplace of all motives. A history of philosophy and theology could be written in terms of grouches, wounded pride, and aversions, and it would be far more instructive than the usual treatments of these themes. Sometimes, under Providence, the lowly impulse of resentment leads to great achievements. Milton wrote his treatise on divorce as a result of his troubles with his seventeen-year-old wife, and when he was accused of being the leading spirit in a new sect, the Divorcers, he wrote his noble AREOPAGITICA to prove his right to say what he thought fit, and incidentally to establish the advantage of a free press in the promotion of Truth.[29]—JAMES HARVEY ROBINSON

In the following paragraph the author first states his conclusion in the first sentence, then proceeds to prove the truth of his assertion. In the final sentence he summarizes his conclusion in somewhat different words.

Paragraph 22

How absurd that here in America we should condescend toward our fiction! How ridiculous in a country even yet so weak and poor and crude in the arts, which has contributed so little to the world's store of all that makes fine living for the mind! What a laughable parallel of the cock and the gem he found and left upon the dung-heap, if we could be proved not to be proud of American fiction! For if the novel and the short story should be left out of America's slender contribution to world literature, the offering would be a small one. Some poetry of Whitman's and of Poe's, some essays of Emerson, a little Thoreau, and what important besides? Hawthorne would be left from the count, the best exemplar of the fine art of moral narrative in any language; Henry James would be left out, the master of them all in psychological character analysis. Poe the story-teller would be missing, and the art of the modern short story, which in English stems from him; Cooper would be lost from our accounting, for all his crudities the best historical novelist after Scott; Mark Twain, Howells, Bret Harte, Irving! *The attempt to exalt American literature is grateful if one begins upon fiction.*[30]—HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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[29] *The Mind in the Making.* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1921. L. & C., p. 164.
[30] *Definitions.* New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922.

b. The inductive paragraph. Let us now vary our previous example and suppose that a visitor from Mars comes to earth. He has, let us assume, never seen a horse. We point one out to him, and he notices that it has four legs. He sees another, and another, and another; he notes that each is a quadruped. The conclusion gradually forms in his mind that *all* horses have four legs. His process of reasoning is called *induction.*

Inductive reasoning involves *synthesis*—putting together facts in order to reach a general conclusion. The term "inductive" is derived from the Latin *in* (toward) + *ducere* (to lead)—that is, the process of thinking leads not away from but *toward* a generalization. Our Martian visitor reached his conclusion regarding horses after having put together a number of observed facts.

A paragraph following the inductive method usually commences with the particular facts and moves toward the generalization, which is stated in the topic sentence at the end of the paragraph.

In the following paragraph the author, using the scientific method of induction, makes a discovery regarding rainbows as the result of certain phenomena that he has witnessed.

Paragraph 23

When we had made the landing, and I stood at the edge of the wharf looking out over the water, I saw a bow that was quite different. This one had its foot directly in front of me and so near that I could have tossed a pebble into it or reached it with a short fish pole. From this point in front of me it arched to the left; it was entirely to the left of me. This bow was much larger than the one we had seen from the boat and it was incomplete in the sense that you could not see all of it at one time. The foot of it was quite steady, but the other parts of it came into view and faded from sight as bodies of mist and stray wisps of vapor came sailing along and passed through it. By seeing it thus in parts one could form an idea of the arch as a whole. When any of it passed out of sight you knew it was still there. *One might almost say that there is always a rainbow attendant upon any man; but it takes this floating vapor and a westering light to make it visible.*[31]—Charles D. Stewart

Let us look at another example of an inductive paragraph. Here the author, by enumerating some of the difficulties which faced George Washington and by showing some of the qualities of greatness which he exhibited, leads the reader to the conclusion that he was "the noblest heritage of all."

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[31] "A Word for Thoreau," from the *Atlantic Monthly,* July, 1935.

Paragraph 24

There were great patriots in America whose names are inscribed in the story of that time. There were many humble folk whose names have faded from our histories or were never known outside their narrow village circle, who struggled and suffered from the noblest motives. But war brings out the worst as well as the best in men. It is a mistake to think of the America of 1776-1783 as a nation of patriots pressing their services to gain their freedom. It was hard to get men into the army, and to keep them there. Often Washington had neither money nor food nor clothing to offer them. But he always had an army, pitifully small as it was at times, which held the flag flying in the field through love of him and confidence in the character which they sensed in his dignified presence. Without him the cause would have been irretrievably lost, and the thunder of the orators would have rumbled long since into forgetful silence. When the days were blackest, men clung to his unfaltering courage as to the last firm ground in a rising flood. When, later, the forces of disunion in the new country seemed to threaten disruption, men again rallied to him as the sole bond of union. *Legacy to America from these troubled years, he is, apart from independence itself, the noblest heritage of all.*[32]—JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS

2. Paragraphs which clarify ideas. The proof of a fact is usually too intricate and involved to be susceptible of treatment in a single paragraph; the majority of "thinking" paragraphs enunciate and clarify ideas which, when linked together in a series of paragraphs, lead to a larger unit of thought—either the thought of the whole composition or one of its major topics.

Ideas may be clarified in five general ways (or by a combination of any two or more of these methods): (a) definition; (b) classification or division; (c) illustration; (d) comparison or contrast; (e) restatement. Let us look at illustrations of these methods.

a. Definition. Note that in the following example the author does not attempt a formal definition; he endeavors to explain a reverie in terms of the kind of thoughts that constitute a reverie.

Paragraph 25

We all appear to ourselves to be thinking all the time during our waking hours, and most of us are aware that we go on thinking while we sleep, even more foolishly than when awake. When uninterrupted by some practical issue we are engaged in what is known as REVERIE. This is our spontaneous and favorite kind of thinking. We allow our ideas to take their own course and this course is determined by our hopes and fears, our spontaneous desires, their fulfillment or frustration; by our likes and dislikes, our loves and hates and resentments. There is nothing else anything like so interesting to ourselves as ourselves. *All thought that is not more or less laboriously controlled and directed will inevitably circle about the beloved Ego.* It is amusing and pathetic to observe this tendency in ourselves and in others. We learn politely and generously to overlook this truth, but if we dare to think of it, it blazes forth like the noontide sun.[33]—James Harvey Robinson

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[32] *The Epic of America.* Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1931.

In the next example the same author defines another type of thinking—which he later calls "creative thought"—by first differentiating it from the other types already discussed and then by defining it in terms of what it *does.*

Paragraph 26

This brings us to another kind of thought which can fairly easily be distinguished from the three kinds described above. It has not the usual qualities of the reverie, for it does not hover about our personal complacencies and humiliations. It is not made up of the homely decisions forced upon us by everyday needs, when we review our little stock of existing information, consult our conventional preferences and obligations, and make a choice of action. It is not the defense of our own cherished beliefs and prejudices just because they are our own—mere plausible excuses for remaining of the same mind. *On the contrary, it is that peculiar species of thought which leads us to* CHANGE *our mind.*[34]—James Harvey Robinson

b. Classification. This method, which also frequently occurs in introductory, summarizing, and transitional paragraphs, is employed when the writer wishes to classify, or pigeonhole, his ideas in certain groups. In the following paragraph the author, having quoted the First and Fifth Amendments to the Constitution, distinguishes between the two groups of human rights which are affected by each amendment:

Paragraph 27

Now the significance of these statements for our argument lies in the sharpness of the difference which they establish between two sets of human interests. We are trying in our defining of liberty to separate those activities which may properly be hindered and restrained from those which, in our judgment, brook no interference. And the Amendments to the Constitution which I have quoted tell us, in clear words, what, in the structure of our government, that separation is. *On the one hand, Religion, Speech, the Press, Assemblage, Protest—these the Federal Congress may not touch. They are*

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[33] *The Mind in the Making.* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1921. L. & C., p. 161.
[34] *Ibid.* L. & C., p. 165.

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free. On the other hand, Life, Liberty, and Property—these are to be regulated and restrained by Congress: they may even be taken away provided that the action by which this is done is justly and properly performed.[35] —ALEXANDER MEIKLEJOHN

c. Division. In the interests of clearness a writer may wish to divide a topic into several parts. In the following paragraph the author, after having made a division of his subject, also points out the superior importance of one of the divisions:

Paragraph 28

Study of the problem of war should include four main divisions: first, study of the nature of war, physical, psychological, and economic, both in its duration and in its after-effects; second, study of the general causes of war; third, study of present international situations which are war-breeders; and fourth, study of the existing resources for the prevention of war, including the League, pacts, peace organizations, and so on. But most of all you should study the causes of war, the underlying and the immediate, the economic and the non-economic. This is the critical point; it is the point at which the peace effort of our time is weakest; and it is the point at which collegiate thought can do most good. The general current tendency, especially when emotion gets the better of intelligence, is to skip the causes and jump to the suppression of war as such. Suppressive efforts cannot possibly suffice for the achievement of peace. War, though in its vicious turn a cause, is itself primarily a result rather than a cause; and the dread disease of war cannot possibly be cured until its causes are cured. Suppression may postpone or divert the outbreak, but so long as a festering cause remains the outbreak is bound to come. You can no more rid the world of war by suppression than you can cure measles by suppressing an eruption. If you want to use your thought where it will count most, study in particular the causes of war.[36]—ERNEST HATCH WILKINS

d. Illustration. One of the most effective ways of explaining an idea is to illustrate it. This method is not to be confused with the inductive paragraph (see Paragraphs 23 and 24, *supra*), which proves an idea by adducing evidence. Illustration seeks not to prove, but to clarify.

Paragraph 29

Imagine that there are two people walking along the beach in leisure where the sea resounds. "It sounds like eternity," says one. "Well," says the other, "it sounds to me more like shoveling coal down a chute." The contrast is perhaps sharp, but it is not extreme, for each has sensed and conveyed to the other in language the intrinsic quality of his experience. The deeper difference lies between them both and the man who, walking by the sea, does not name it for its sound at all, does not pause to receive the sound into his mind, but names it *brine*—water with a three and one-half per cent solution of natural salts which he might precipitate with a distillery and put to a profitable use. *He is the practical man.*[37]—MAX EASTMAN

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[35] *Harper's Magazine,* August, 1935. L. & C., p. 214.

[36] From two addresses given at Oberlin College. L. & C., p. 252.

e. Comparison and contrast. Sometimes the writer wishes to compare or contrast *two* ideas, both of which are important to the discussion. In the following paragraph, for example, the author wishes to point out the two sides of man's nature: the animal and the vegetable. Having first described man's vegetable nature, which makes its appearance in the spring, he contrasts this, in his topic sentence in the middle of the paragraph, with the animal nature, which has been uppermost during the winter. The last three sentences carry out the contrast still further.

Paragraph 30

In the season of the year when "the sap creeps up and the blossoms swell," man feels vegetable stirrings within him. He takes to salads. He meditates on a lettuce leaf. His thoughts turn with longing to greens; the dandelion of the lawn, the sorrel of the woods, the cress of the garden or stream, pale endive or chickory, long-leaved romaine or cos, each is in its turn a poem, a moment's monument. A green pepper becomes the quintessence of all that's green; in it the coolness of a New England spring is married to the pungency of a tropical summer. All winter the red of fire or flannel has been grateful; now the colors that thrill him are green and blue. *All winter he has been an animal, and, like the animals, has probably longed to hibernate; but in spring the vegetable part of him awakes.* The sap-serum in his veins has become choked with overfed red corpuscles as a trout brook is choked with water cress in late summer, and now he unconsciously longs to become sappy. Even the carnivores, the cats and dogs, may be detected eating grass. They, through domestication, have become more or less vegetable, too.[38]—ROBERT M. GAY

At other times the writer may desire to develop a *single* idea by comparing or contrasting it with others. In Paragraph 31 the author is defining the essay. The first half of the paragraph illustrates, by means of contrast, the difference between the essay and other forms of writing. After the topic sentence, which occurs in the middle of the paragraph, the author devotes the remainder of the paragraph to defining the essay, again using the methods of comparison and contrast.

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[37] "Names Practical and Poetic," from *The Enjoyment of Poetry.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921.

[38] "A Green Thought." Reprinted in Tanner, *Modern Familiar Essays.* Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1927.

Paragraph 31

The sonnet has a standard form very much as a man has. Leave off the sestet of your sonnet and you do about what a god does when he leaves the legs off a man. The drama has a standard form very much as a rendezvous has. Write a drama in which no spark is exchanged between the audience and the action, and you have done what fate does when it keeps lovers from their meeting. The novel has a standard form very much as a road has. You may set out anywhere you like and go wherever you please, at any gait, but you must go somewhere, or you have made what is no more a novel than some engineer's road would be a road if it had neither beginning, end, nor direction. *But the essay! It may be of any length, breadth, depth, weight, density, color, savor, odor, appearance, importance, value, or uselessness which you can or will give it.* The epigram bounds it on one side and the treatise on the other, but it has in its time encroached upon the territory of both of them, and it doubtless will do so again. Or, to look at the essay from another angle, it is bounded on one side by the hell-fire sermon and on the other by the geometrical demonstration; and yet it ranges easily between these extremes of heat and cold and occasionally steals from both of them. It differs from a letter by being written to more—happily a great many more—than one person. It differs from talk chiefly by being written at all.[39]—CARL VAN DOREN

f. Restatement. One of the most common means of clarifying an idea is to restate it in different words. Broadly speaking, an idea may be restated by employing any of the four functions which we have just studied, but we are here concerned with a narrower concept of the word "restatement." Nevertheless the method is capable of great variation, and we shall do well to study examples of this type when we come across them in our reading. One of the most common methods is a restatement in the negative—showing what we mean by explaining what we do *not* mean. This method is employed in Paragraph 33 below.

Paragraph 32

Second, it is asserted, liberty and equality are economic principles. They refer to the getting and having of material things. By liberty we mean that, just so far as possible, men shall be unhindered in their business affairs. The principle of freedom is the principle of free competition in financial and industrial life. So too, equality is, for this argument, economic in meaning. Equality would mean—if it were not too nonsensical to mean anything—that all the members of a society share equally in the having of goods. It is equality of getting, of possessing what one wants.[40]—ALEXANDER MEIKLEJOHN

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[39] "A Note on the Essay," from *The New Pearson's.* Reprinted in Sharon Brown, *Essays of Our Times.* Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1928.

Paragraph 33

The old Hebrew sage declared, "Wisdom cometh from the opportunity of leisure." It does not mean that a wise man must belong to what we call the leisure classes. It means that if one has only a little free time at his disposal, he must use that time for the refreshment of his hidden selves. If he cannot have a Sabbath rest of twenty-four hours, he must learn to sanctify little Sabbaths, it may be of ten minutes' length. In them he shall do no manner of work. It is not enough that the self that works and receives wages shall be recognised and protected; the world must be made safe for our other selves. Does not the Declaration of Independence say that every man has an inalienable right to the pursuit of happiness?[41]—SAMUEL MCCHORD CROTHERS

E. ARRANGEMENT

After we have carefully studied the type and function of any paragraph which we are going to write, one important consideration remains—the question of arrangement.

Let us assume, as a hypothetical case, that we are about to construct a paragraph. Let us further assume that we have already decided the major questions which our study up to this point has raised—namely, the type of paragraph which we are going to write; the framing of a topic sentence; the problem of whether the topic sentence is to be implied or expressed; the function which the paragraph is to perform; and the position of the topic sentence (if expressed). One further consideration remains—a consideration of great importance: How is the material in this paragraph to be arranged?

Some paragraphs seem to arrange themselves, once we have decided how we are going to develop them and where we are going to place our topic sentence. We have seen, for example, that when using the deductive method, we usually place the topic sentence first, or both first and last. After we have settled this general problem of arrangement, however, we often still have to consider more particular questions.

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[40] "Liberty—for What?" from *Harper's Magazine,* August, 1935. L. & C., p. 219.

[41] "Every Man's Natural Desire to Be Somebody Else," from *The Dame School of Experience.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920.

Listed below are some of the more common methods of arranging the ideas of a paragraph. Most of these have been illustrated in the paragraphs which we have already analyzed, and by restudying them to discover the order and manner in which the ideas are presented, we can gain a new conception of the variety and originality which we can infuse into our own paragraphs.

1. From the particular to the general, or from the general to the particular
    a. From the particular to the general
        Paragraph 13, p. 40.
        Paragraph 23, p. 49.
    b. From the general to the particular
        Paragraph 10, p. 39.
        Paragraph 17 (1), pp. 43-44.
        Paragraph 21, p. 48.
        Paragraph 32, pp. 54-55.
        Paragraph 28, p. 52.
2. From cause to effect, or from effect to cause
    a. From cause to effect
        Paragraph 22, p. 48.
    b. From effect to cause
        Paragraph 17 (3), p. 44.
        Paragraph 30, p. 53.
3. From positive to negative, or from negative to positive
    a. From positive to negative
        Paragraph 7, pp. 35-36.
        Paragraph 20, pp. 45-46.
    b. From negative to positive
        Paragraph 8, p. 36.
        Paragraph 26, p. 51.
4. From the familiar to the unfamiliar, or from the unfamiliar to the familiar
    a. From the familiar to the unfamiliar
        Paragraph 17 (2), p. 44.
    b. From the unfamiliar to the familiar
        Paragraph 25, pp. 50-51.
5. Climax (from lesser to greater importance), or anticlimax (from greater to lesser importance)
    a. Climax
        Paragraph 5, p. 35.
    b. Anticlimax
        Paragraph 4, p. 34.

6. From time to time, or from place to place
    a. From time to time
        Paragraph 1, p. 32.
    b. From place to place
        Paragraph 23, p. 49.

7. From one point to another, or alternating between one and another
    a. From one point to another
        Paragraph 27, p. 51.
        Paragraph 29, pp. 52-53.
    b. Alternating between one and another
        Paragraph 28, p. 52.

8. Combinations of any of the foregoing arrangements
    a. From time to time; from the general to the particular
        Paragraph 12, p. 40.
    b. From the general to the particular; from the particular to the general
        Paragraph 14, pp. 40-41.
    c. From the general to the particular; from the particular to the general; from negative to positive (twice)
        Paragraph 16, p. 42.
    d. From general to the particular; from cause to effect
        Paragraph 18, p. 44.
    e. From the general to the particular; from time to time
        Paragraph 19, p. 45.
    f. From positive to negative; from particular to general
        Paragraph 24, p. 50.
    g. From the familiar to the unfamiliar; from the general to the particular
        Paragraph 31, p. 54.
    h. From effect to cause, from cause to effect
        Paragraph 11, p. 39.

Exercise 6. The Paragraph

In each of the following paragraphs point out: (1) the function—*i.e.,* whether it is used either to prove or clarify an idea; (2) the topic sentence or sentences, whether expressed or implied; (3) the method of development; (4) the method of arrangement; (5) the transitional devices.

Paragraph 34

But you don't find feelings in written words unless there were feelings in the man who used them. With all their apparent independence they seem to be little vessels that hold in some puzzling fashion exactly what is put into them. You can put tears into them, as though they were so many little buckets; and you can hang smiles along them, like Monday's clothes on the line, or you can starch them with facts and stand them up like a picket fence; but you won't get the tears out unless you first put them in. Art won't put them there. It is like the faculty of getting the quality of interest into pictures. If the quality exists in the artist's mind he is likely to find means to get it into his pictures, but if it isn't in the man no technical skill will supply it. So, if the feelings are in the writer and he knows his business, they will get into the words; but they must be in him first. It isn't the way the words are strung together that makes Lincoln's Gettysburg speech immortal, but the feelings that were in the man. But how do such little, plain words manage to keep their grip on such feelings? That is the miracle.[42] —C. A. DANA

Paragraph 35

It is said that only those slang words which fill a vacancy are taken up into reputable discourse, but in reality literature is ever on the watch for terms which are peculiarly poignant or akin to their objects, and ready at any day to exchange for them an equivalent synonym. *Lurid* is a word exactly expressing the character of modern cheap newspapers, but is not altogether living, and so in the first flush of their realization a new name came to birth. They were *yellow.* And yet so strange is time, and so eternal is the perfection of a metaphor which is perfect, that if we turn back to the days when the word *lurid* was born and when it too joyfully lived, we find in it exactly the same poetry. It is *luridus,* a Latin word for "yellow."[43] —MAX EASTMAN

Paragraph 36

A girl with graduate training as a chemist is now earning her food and shelter by looking after two small children. High-spirited and ambitious, she had expected that chemistry would be the work of her life. Education had given her assurance and knowledge, chemists were needed, her livelihood was assured. Now, as an individual, she finds that every hope is blasted. As a citizen and as a member of society, able to make a needed contribution to the demands of a highly complex civilization, she is thrown away. Wasted and discarded, she is still alive and thinking and outraged, adding one more to the generation of the lost. How is she, in her present occupation, going to regard the suggestion made at a conference on Youth Problems called by the United States Department of Education, that more young women enter domestic service! Multiply this girl by the others. Put her beside the girl who, after years of training as a typographer both in this country and abroad, was found down and out, jobless, sleeping in a railroad station. Put her with the young doctors driving taxicabs and the young engineers looking for window-washing jobs. What are these people going to be like when they reach middle age? How are they going to think and act—then?[44]—George R. Leighton and Richard Hellman

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[42] "Words That Laugh and Cry," from the New York *Sun.*

[43] "Names Practical and Poetic," from *The Enjoyment of Poetry.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921.

Paragraph 37

The fortunes of Essex had now reached their height, and began to decline. He possessed indeed all the qualities which raise men to greatness rapidly. But he had neither the virtues nor the vices which enable men to retain greatness long. His frankness, his keen sensibility to insult and injustice, were by no means agreeable to a sovereign naturally impatient of opposition, and accustomed, during forty years, to the most extravagant flattery and the most abject submission. The daring and contemptuous manner in which he bade defiance to his enemies excited their deadly hatred. His administration in Ireland was unfortunate, and in many respects highly blamable. Though his brilliant courage and his impetuous activity fitted him admirably for such enterprises as that of Cadiz, he did not possess the caution, patience, and resolution necessary for the conduct of a protracted war, in which difficulties were to be gradually surmounted, in which much discomfort was to be endured, and in which few splendid exploits could be achieved. For the civil duties of his high place he was still less qualified. Though eloquent and accomplished, he was in no sense a statesman. The multitude indeed still continued to regard even his faults with fondness. But the Court had ceased to give him credit, even for the merit which he really possessed. The person on whom, during the decline of his influence, he chiefly depended, to whom he confided his perplexities, whose advice he solicited, whose intercession he employed, was his friend Bacon. The lamentable truth must be told. This friend, so loved, so trusted, bore a principal part in ruining the Earl's fortunes, in shedding his blood, and in blackening his memory.[45] —Thomas B. Macaulay

Paragraph 38

An essay is a communication. If the subject of the discourse were the whole affair, it would be enough for the essayist to be an adequate conduit. If the manner were the whole affair, any versatile fellow might try all the manners and have a universal triumph. But back of matter and manner both lies the item which is really significant. The person who communicates in any way must be a person. His truth must have a tone, his speech must have a rhythm which are his and solely his. His knowledge or opinions must have lain long enough inside him to have taken root there; and when they come away they must bring some of the soil clinging to them. They must, too, have been shaped by that soil—as plants are which grow in cellars, on housetops, on hillsides, in wide fields, under shade in forests. Many kinds of men, many kinds of essays! Important essays come from important men.[46] —Carl Van Doren

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[44] "Half Slave, Half Free," from *Harper's Magazine,* August, 1935.

[45] "Essay on Bacon."

[46] "A Note on the Essay," from *The New Pearson's.* Reprinted in Sharon Brown, *Essays of Our Times.* Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1928.

Exercise 7. The Paragraph

Construct three paragraphs, using any three of the following topic sentences. At the end of each paragraph state (1) the method of development and (2) the method of arrangement. Underline the topic sentence.

1. It is commonly said that everybody can sing in the bathroom; and this is true.—A. P. Herbert
2. A sense of security is difficult of definition.—David W. Bone
3. Divide your attentions equally between books and men.—Sir William Osler
4. There are dark and morbid moods in which I am tempted to feel that Evil reëntered the world in the form of Essays.—G. K. Chesterton
5. There are more painful than pleasurable sensations in one's contact with a huge American city of the present day.—Stuart Chase
6. Possibly the art of play is lost in childhood.—Earnest Elmo Calkins
7. Certainly real friendships are always rare.—Van Wyck Brooks
8. When we are young we are unhappy because we believe too many things which are either untrue or unprovable.—Ernest Boyd
9. Machines are as indifferent to the inner life as they are to happiness. —George Boas
10. I take it that the essence of good manners is the gift of putting people at their ease, not the chosen few people whom one likes, but all people. —Mary Borden
11. The habit of seeing only silver linings in the clouds is deeply rooted in the American temperament.—Robert Herrick
12. People generally walk because they cannot afford to ride.—Walter S. Hinchman
13. Only Man has dignity; only man, therefore, can be funny.—Ronald Knox
14. Two things youth desires beyond all others: freedom from ridicule, and intensity of sensation.—L. Wardlaw Miles
15. For my part I find daily life not always joyous, but always interesting. —William Lyon Phelps
16. A pessimist is one who has been intimately acquainted with an optimist. —Elbert Hubbard
17. Men build bridges and throw railroads across deserts, and yet they contend successfully that the job of sewing on a button is beyond them. —Heywood Broun
18. With a furnace like mine a man experiences all the emotions of which he is capable.—Ralph Bergengren
19. So far, then, we have found two elements in the public's humour: delight in suffering, contempt for the unfamiliar.—Max Beerbohm
20. Have you never marveled at the patience of people in having so many things done to them that they don't want, just to avoid hurting the feelings of professional people who want to do more than is expected of them?—Samuel McChord Crothers

21. The American rule compelling the woman to precede her escort when entering a room or building doubtless originated with our ancestor the cave man.—Oliver Herford
22. Breakfast as a social medium has never flourished in America, chiefly because of our lack of leisure.—Meredith Nicholson
23. What a bore it is, waking up in the morning always the same person. —Logan Pearsall Smith
24. A talkative person is like an English sparrow—a bird that cannot sing, and will sing, and ought to be persuaded not to try to sing. —Henry Van Dyke
25. Outwardly you may be on friendly terms with the people next door, but, if the truth were known, you do not think much of them.—Frank Moore Colby
26. Nothing is more entertaining than the horror of the rich at the extravagance of the poor.—Edgar J. Goodspeed
27. It is a fact, belonging rather to the science of psychology than of medicine, that small sicknesses hurt more than big ones.—Winifred Kirkland
28. Invalids have always run the world.—Thomas L. Masson
29. Of all men, tramps and peers care least about their appearance.—E. V. Lucas
30. A graduate is one who is proud of his alma mater. An alumnus is one who is ashamed of her when she begins to lose football games.—Robert Littell

CHAPTER III

GRAMMAR

WHY STUDY GRAMMAR?

UP till now we have been dealing with the larger units of writing, the composition as a whole and the paragraph. We have seen how both of these units require, first of all, unity; second, a logical arrangement; and, finally, an original and effective method of development.

We are now ready to study a smaller unit of writing—the sentence. Here we shall encounter two problems, one negative and the other positive. In the writing we have already done we have had our attention called to certain definite mistakes that we habitually make; accordingly we shall have to learn *what not to do*. On the other hand, much of our writing, while not incorrect, may have been dull; our ideas may have been entertaining and well organized, but they were not well expressed. In order to make them effective in writing, we shall have to learn *what to do*. Both these positive and negative aspects of writing we can best master by an intensive study of the sentence.

Before we take up the theory of the sentence, however, we should have a thorough understanding of sentence structure. We should know what a sentence is: the nature of the elements which comprise it and the functions which these elements perform. One of the greatest assets which we can have for such a study is a knowledge of grammar.

Every literate person can write, can give at least rough expression to his thoughts by putting them on paper. And so when a mature student is asked to begin his study of the sentence by reviewing the grammar of his "grammar school" or secondary school days, he naturally desires to know why he is being sent back to a consideration of elementary principles.

Learning elementary principles naturally makes one restive. The person who wants to become an airplane pilot resents having to attend a ground school; he wants to climb at once into a plane and do his learning there. Yet one of the first things that a ground school teaches is the mechanism of the airplane engine. The student flyer must learn the name of every part and must train himself to dismantle and assemble an engine with the dexterity of an expert mechanic. He must, in fact, learn to be his own mechanic, for he never knows when he will be forced down in a remote region where he will have to diagnose his own trouble and remedy it himself.

The student of writing is in a similar position. Before he can learn to write clear and effective English, he must learn to be his own critic. The instructor will not always be at his elbow to point out errors and to give advice. The student must learn to stand confidently on his own feet. And he must begin at the same place as the student of flying. Before he can learn to discover, diagnose, and remedy mistakes, he must know, first of all, how a sentence works. He must be able to call the parts of the sentence by their correct names, and must know the function of each one of those parts.

The instructor, from his point of view, feels the need of being able to explain mistakes in technical terms. He is accustomed to call the elements of a sentence by their correct names and is handicapped if his students know neither the names themselves nor their significance. Imagine for a moment a flying instructor who had to refer to a carburetor as "that thingamabob in there to the right of that funny looking gadget that has a wire sticking out of it." And how could he explain what the carburetor does? Even if he were able, by a combination of words and sign language, to make himself understood, the intelligent student would still want to know *why*. It would be a poor instructor who would say, "Never mind. Don't ask any foolish questions. I've told you the facts—now go and memorize them!"

Let us take a simple example. It is considered incorrect to say, "The reason he failed is *because* he did not try." Why is it incorrect? If a student does not know grammar, the instructor is forced to make a categorical answer: "That's the rule. Just remember not to say it." On the other hand, if the student is familiar with the names and functions of an adjective, an adverb, and a copulative verb, the instructor could make himself clear in a moment by saying, "A copulative verb must be followed by a noun or an adjective, or their equivalents. Since a clause introduced by *because* is adverbial, it cannot be used as a noun or an adjective. You must use a noun clause and say, for example: 'The reason he failed is *that* he did not try,' or 'He failed because he did not try.'"

There is another aspect to our study of grammar. It need not be only a tool; it can be a fascinating study in its own right. Like physics or mathematics, it is a science. It is not, however, immutable, subject to the kind of fixed laws that govern the solution of equations or the velocity of falling bodies. Because it deals with the words which we use in everyday speaking and writing, it must adapt itself to changing conditions. It is always subject to revision by *usage*. Usage today allows us to use many words and constructions which would have been considered incorrect a hundred years ago. Thus our own language is changing, imperceptibly but none the less surely, under our very eyes. The changes themselves and the reasons which dictate them constitute only a small fraction of the interest which a study of grammar can impart.

This study, as we have seen, has a twofold aspect: first, as nomenclature; second, as function. Learning the names of the parts of a sentence enables us to talk in terms which we all understand. Learning the functions of these parts helps us to diagnose the mistakes which we make and intelligently to go about the business of correcting and improving what we have written.

The following chapter is intended as a review of only the minimum essentials of grammar, so that the way may be cleared for the study of the sentence.

A. THE PARTS OF SPEECH

For convenience, words are divided into eight classes, called "parts of speech": nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections.

1. Nouns. A noun is a word used as the name of a person, place, or thing—as, *man, home, liberty, Chicago.* Most nouns are *common nouns,* but if they name a particular person, place, or thing, they are called *proper nouns*—as, *Henry, Washington,* the *Capitol.*[1]

A *proper noun* should always be capitalized; a common noun but rarely. *Roman Catholic, England,* and *Chevrolet* are proper nouns.

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[1] Phrases and clauses may also be used as nouns. See pp. 113, 117-118.

A *collective noun* names a collection or group of persons or things. It is usually considered as singular in number unless the members of the collection or group are considered as individuals.[2] *Jury, committee, flock* are collective nouns.

2. **Pronouns.** A pronoun is a word that is used instead of a noun—as, *he, she, they, who.* The noun or noun-equivalent for which the pronoun stands is called its antecedent.

A pronoun agrees with its antecedent in gender and number and person. That is, if the antecedent is in the third person feminine singular, the pronoun must be in the third person feminine singular. Some pronouns, however, do not have separate forms to denote gender and number. (For case of personal pronouns, see pp. 80-89.)

We may distinguish several classes of pronouns:

a. Personal pronouns—as, *he, she, it, they.* Personal pronouns indicate the *person* of the individual or group speaking (first person), spoken to (second person), or spoken of (third person).

Here we may note that the personal pronoun *it* has three additional usages. In none of these does it have a definite antecedent.

(1) *It* used impersonally. In this use *it* refers vaguely to an action, condition, or state—as of the weather.

Examples: *It* is raining. (What is raining?)
It looks like a beautiful day. (What looks like a beautiful day?)

(2) *It* used as expletive subject. In this use *it* merely fills the role of a substitute for the subject of the verb until the real subject is reached. It has no logical part in the sentence.

Examples: *It* is hard to study in hot weather.
It is true that he will be elected.

In the first sentence above, the simple subject of the verb is *to study.* (To study is hard.) In the second sentence the subject of the verb is *that he will be elected.* (That he will be elected is true.) In neither sentence does *it* play a logical part.[3]

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[2] For a discussion of the agreement between verbs and collective nouns, see pp. 93-94.

[3] *There* is similarly used as an expletive—as, *There* are two books on the table. (*Two books* is the subject of *are.*)

For the number of the verb following *it* and *there* expletive, see pp. 92, 94.

It and *there* as expletives should be sparingly used; the constructions are conducive to wordiness and general obscurity. (See p. 227.)

(3) *It* used as expletive object. *It* may also stand for a direct object. In this use *it* fills the role of a substitute for the object of the verb until the logical object—be it a person, thing, action, or idea—is reached.

Examples: We found *it* difficult to explain the mistake. (We found explaining the mistake difficult.)
He thought *it* a pity that he had to leave. (He found that-he-had-to-leave to be a pity.)

b. Relative pronouns[4]—as, *who* (*whom, whose*), *which, that, what* (*i.e.,* that which). These not only stand for nouns but also act as connectives between two ideas.

Examples: This is the man *who* spoke to me.
He read the book *that* I recommended.

In the first sentence *who* not only stands for *man* but also serves to connect two ideas: (1) *This is the man;* and (2) (*he*) *spoke to me.*

There are two classes of relative pronouns:

(1) Simple relative pronouns—as, *who, which, that.*
(2) Compound relative pronouns—as, *whoever, whichever.* (For case of relative pronouns, see pp. 87-89.)

c. Interrogative pronouns[5]—as, *who* (*whose, whom*), *what, which.* Although these have the same form as the relative pronouns, they have a different use. They ask questions. These questions may be either direct or indirect.

Examples: Who are you? (direct question)
He asked *who* you were. (indirect question)

(For case of interrogative pronouns, see p. 89.)

d. Demonstrative pronouns[5]—as, *this, that.* These pronouns are used to point out nouns or noun-equivalents.

Example: That is not my book.

e. Possessive pronouns[5]—as, *his, theirs, its.* These pronouns denote possession; they stand for a noun and its possessive modifier.

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[4] For relative pronouns used as adjectives, see p. 72.
[5] For this type of pronoun used as an adjective, see p. 72.

Examples: The book is *his*.
I could not find my paper, but I discovered *theirs*.

Note especially that these pronouns, unlike nouns, do not use the apostrophe (') to denote possession.

Examples: The dog wagged *its* tail. (no apostrophe)
This furniture is *theirs*. (no apostrophe)

***Warning:* Distinguish carefully between *its* and *it's*.**

(1) *Its* is the possessive pronoun.
(2) *It's* is a contraction of *it is;* the apostrophe (') stands for the omitted *i* in *is*.

f. Indefinite pronouns—as, *anybody, anyone, each, either, everybody, everyone, neither, none, no one, one*. These pronouns point out an indefinite antecedent, which is seldom expressed.

***Warning:* Since the foregoing indefinite pronouns are *third person singular,* note that (1) the verb must be in the third person singular, and (2) any personal pronoun which refers to an indefinite pronoun must be in the third person singular.**[6]

Examples: No one *knows* what to do.
Everyone *is* compelled to make up *his* (*one's*) [7] mind.
Each *chooses* the course which *he intends* to follow.

g. Compound forms of the personal pronoun—as, *myself, itself, themselves*. These forms have two special uses:

(1) As intensive pronouns, used to intensify or emphasize a noun or noun-equivalent.

Examples: I *myself* am responsible.
They *themselves* did it.
John *himself* stood in the door.

***Warning:* Do not use the intensive pronoun unnecessarily instead of the personal pronoun unless special emphasis is intended.**

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[6] A few indefinite pronouns are plural—as, *both, many, others.*
Examples: Both were responsible for the accident.
Others take the opposite view.

[7] An old rule, not yet quite outmoded, requires the use of *one's* when reference is made to the pronoun *one.*

Examples: *Wrong:* Jack and *myself* did it.
Right: Jack and *I* did it.
Wrong: They invited Henry and *myself* to the party.
Right: They invited Henry and *me* to the party.[8]

(2) As reflexive pronouns, used to denote the object of the action of the verb when that object is the same as the subject. (For case of reflexive pronouns, see p. 87.)

Examples: I cut *myself.*
The prisoner shot *himself.*
They put *themselves* in office.

Warning: **Guard against faulty reference of pronouns.** One of the most persistent errors in writing is the violation of the rule that a pronoun must usually have a *definite* antecedent.[9] That antecedent should possess two qualifications:

(1) The antecedent should be *clear and unmistakable.* The reader should be able to identify it without any hesitation.

(2) The antecedent should be definitely present, either in the same sentence or in the preceding sentence. The chief offenders are *it, this, that,* and *which.*

The following sentences contain examples of faulty pronoun reference. What are the antecedents of the italicized words?

The first thing I do is call a garage, and *they* send over a mechanic.
There is a book on the table, *which* belongs to my father.
I had three poems published in the paper. *This* occurred before I entered high school.
There is something else that determines the success of a story. *It* is the way in which *it* is written. (The antecedent of the first *it* is *something else;* the antecedent of the second is *story.*)

Faulty reference of *this* and *that* may often be cured by changing these demonstrative pronouns into pronominal adjectives[10] modifying a summarizing noun, as follows:

I had three poems published in the paper. *This* good fortune occurred before I entered high school.

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[8] There is authority for the use of the intensive pronoun in a sentence like the following: They invited *my* friends and *myself.* See Sterling A. Leonard, *Current English Usage.* Chicago: The Inland Press, 1935.

[9] The exceptions already noted are: (1) *it* used impersonally (p. 65); (2) the expletive use of *it* (see p. 65); and (3) the indefinite pronouns (see p. 67).

[10] See p. 72.

Which and *all of which* may sometimes be used to refer to the thought contained in a preceding clause, but only if the reference is clear:

He went out bareheaded, *which* aggravated his condition.

(3) Do not use the expletive *it* and the personal pronoun *it* in the same sentence.

Examples: Wrong: I do not like Latin. *It* (expletive) is hard for me to understand *it* (personal pronoun).
Right: I do not like Latin. It is difficult to understand.

(4) Do not use a personal pronoun to refer to a noun in a subordinate construction (*e.g.*, a phrase), unless the reference is immediately clear.

Examples: Wrong: My background in English has not been unusual. *It* has always been my favorite subject. (*It* refers to *English,* which is in a subordinate construction—*i.e.,* the phrase *in English.*)
Right: My background in English has not been unusual. English has always been my favorite subject.
Wrong: Even in the homes of the Greeks *they* had beautiful paintings. (*They* refers to Greeks, which is in a subordinate construction—*i.e.,* the phrase *of the Greeks.*)
Right: Even in their homes the Greeks had beautiful paintings.

Exercise 8. Faulty Use of Pronouns

Correct the errors in the use of pronouns in the following sentences:

1. His employer may bear his work for a short time, hoping for improvement, but he must, in time, realize the futility of this action.
2. There is linoleum in all offices except those of high officials, which were given parquet flooring in their offices.
3. No one knew where they had put their hats.
4. My greatest difficulty was writing themes. This was caused by the lack of study of sentence structure.
5. I went to the hotel this afternoon, and they told me to come back this evening.
6. I have felt keenly the need of English, and this is my object in taking this class.

7. Every one loses their perspective when they become angry.
8. Clara was married, and as such had no right to Paul's love.
9. He had his hat on the back of his head, which looked peculiar.
10. The literature was written by English authors, which did not interest me in the least.
11. In the United States the most feared of all crawling creatures is the snake. This, I believe, is due to the fact that there have been so many lurid stories told about them.
12. The team this year is weak. Its defeat is a foregone conclusion, but it will be interesting to note the results.
13. Now I do my own work, and though it usually results in added difficulties, it is worth it.
14. If one allows his leisure to interfere with his work, it shows a lack of will power.
15. He broke his leg, which he found very inconvenient.
16. Are we to be robbed of understanding and an ultimate appreciation of eminent persons because authors place them above our reach?
17. I have taken English literature in an evening high school, which I found very interesting.
18. The principles of the monks' teachings are difficult to understand. They preach the negation of self.
19. When one is in trouble, they turn to their friends.
20. Tennyson's poem, although he gives a definite picture, is really a product of the imagination.
21. Each are going to report on the book they like best.
22. Our impromptu speeches were on subjects which we had not time to investigate. This was hard for many of us.
23. His friend and himself are going to come.
24. Since starch forms a large portion of one's diet, it will be helpful to study the process of its digestion.
25. The amoeba's activity might be called the power of response to a stimulus, which I learned during a recent zoölogy lecture.

3. Verbs. A verb is a word which states or affirms—as, *cut, lie, seem.* It is convenient to make several classifications of verbs:

a. A *principal verb* expresses action by itself.

Examples: The boy *hit* the ball.
He *seems* intelligent.

b. An *auxiliary verb* serves only to help the principal verb to form various voices, tenses, and moods.

Examples: The boy *has* hit the ball.
The ball *was* hit over the fence.
If he *were* coming, he *would have* come by now.

c. Modal (*finite*) *verbs* have person, number, voice, tense, and mood. *Non-modal* (*infinite*) *verbs* (also called verbals; see p. 103) are restricted in that they may not have person, number, or mood.

Examples: Modal verbs: He *studied* hard.
He *has gone* home.
If it *were* true, I *should be* sorry.
Non-modal verbs: I saw him *studying.*
To study is difficult.
Studying is difficult.

d. A *transitive verb,* takes, or may take, an object—as, *The ball hit the fence.* An *intransitive verb* does not take an object—as, *He walked rapidly.* A verb is sometimes both transitive and intransitive, according to its use—as, *He studied hard* (intransitive); *He studied his lessons* (transitive).

A verb has person, number, voice, tense, and mood.

a. Person and number. The person and number of the subject affect the form of the verb. That is, the verb usually agrees with its subject in person and number; if, for example, the subject is in the third person plural, the verb must be in the third person plural. (For further discussion of person and number, see pp. 91-95.)

***Warning:* Note two common mistakes of agreement in person:**

(1) Instead of saying, "It *doesn't* make any difference," many people make the mistake of saying, "It *don't* make any difference." (*It* is the third person; *don't* is the first or second person.)

(2) Similarly, one sometimes hears the incorrect "you was" instead of "you were."

b. Voice. There are two voices—active and passive. The active voice represents the subject of the verb as acting—as, *The boy hit the ball.* The passive voice represents the subject as acted upon by an agent, which may or may not be expressed—as, *The ball was hit by the boy.* It will be noted that when an active verb is made passive, as in the example above, the object of the active verb becomes the subject of the passive verb; the subject of the active verb, *boy,* becomes the agent, *by the boy.* (For further discussion of voice, see pp. 95-96.)

c. Tense is the modification of the form of the verb to express distinctions of time. There are six leading tenses:

Present, I *study*
Present perfect, I *have studied*
Past, I *studied*
Past perfect, I *had studied*
Future, I *shall study*
Future perfect, I *shall have studied*
(For a further discussion of tense, see pp. 97-101.)

d. Mood is the property of a verb which enables the speaker or writer to express his attitude toward the action, being, or state expressed by the verb. The mood of a verb literally reflects the "mood" of the speaker or writer—his state of mind. There are three moods:

(1) Indicative, which states a fact.

Example: He *went* home.

(2) Subjunctive, which expresses uncertainty or doubt, as in a supposition or a wish.

Examples: If I *were* you, I would not go.
Would that I had been there!

(3) Imperative, which expresses a command.

Example: Go home.

(For further discussion of mood, see pp. 102-103.)

4. Adjectives. An adjective is a word used to modify a noun or pronoun.[11] There are several types of adjectives; the most common are:

a. Descriptive adjectives—as, *white, lazy, beautiful.*

b. Pronominal adjectives: words which are pronouns in form but which are used as adjectives. There are four main classes:

(1) Possessive adjectives: *Her* book is new.
(2) Demonstrative adjectives: *This* book is new.
(3) Interrogative adjectives: *Whose* book is new?
(4) Relative adjectives: He often read "L'Allegro," in *which* poem he found especial interest.

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[11] Phrases and clauses may also be used as adjectives. (See pp. 113, 115-116.)

c. Numeral adjectives—as, *five, second.*
d. Articles—*a, an, the.*

5. Adverbs. An adverb is a word used to modify a verb, an adjective, or another adverb.[12] Adverbs answer the questions: *When? Where? Why? To what degree? How?*

Of the several types of adverbs, the most common are:

a. Simple adverbs: as, *quickly, today, very.*

Examples: He came *quickly.* (modifies the verb *came*)
I am *very* happy. (modifies the adjective *happy*)
He came *too* slowly. (modifies the adverb *slowly*)

b. Interrogative adverbs: as, *how, when, where, why.*

Examples: *How* did you do it?
When are you coming?

c. Conjunctive adverbs. As their name implies, these are adverbs which also have the power to conjoin, or connect, principal clauses. (See p. 114.) The most common of these are *accordingly, also, besides, consequently, furthermore, hence, however, likewise, moreover, nevertheless, notwithstanding, otherwise, so* (therefore), *still, then, therefore, thus,* and *yet.*[13]

***Warning:* Avoid the "comma fault," or "comma splice."** When two principal clauses are joined by any of the conjunctive adverbs enumerated above, they should be separated by a semicolon, not by a comma. Since conjunctive adverbs are primarily adverbs, not conjunctions, they may not be used like coördinating conjunctions (see p. 76) to join principal clauses. A semicolon, not a comma, is necessary to mark the separation. When an inexperienced writer fails to observe this rule, the mistake indicates that he lacks a knowledge of sentence structure. (See also pp. 143-144.)

Examples: *Wrong:* He was wrong, nevertheless he persisted in his attitude.
Right: He was wrong; nevertheless he persisted in his attitude.

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[12] Phrases and clauses may also be used as adverbs. (See pp. 113, 117.)
[13] For *so, then, yet,* see p. 142, n. 3.

Wrong: I saw him, however I did not speak to him.
Right: I saw him; however, I did not speak to him.

Note, however, that the adverbs listed in *c,* above, may be used parenthetically, without any connecting function. (*However,* in the preceding sentence, is used in this manner.) They then cease to be conjunctive adverbs and become parenthetical adverbs. Because they do not modify any particular word in the sentence, but rather the sentence as a whole, they are sometimes called "sentence modifiers."[14]

Examples: He was, *moreover,* an accomplished violinist.
I told him, *nevertheless,* that I would go.

d. Relative adverbs. These are adverbs which, in addition to their use as modifiers, also function as connectives. They resemble relative pronouns in three respects: (1) they introduce a subordinate clause; (2) as connectives, they relate this clause to the preceding clause; and (3) they function as parts of speech in the clause which they introduce; relative pronouns function as pronouns and relative adverbs as adverbs.

Some of the most common relative adverbs are: *how* (in what manner), *when* (at which time), *whence* (from which place), *where* (in which place), *whereby* (by or through which means), *wherever* (in whatever place), *wherein* (in which place), and *why* (on account of which reason).

Let us compare relative adverbs with relative pronouns:

Examples: Relative pronoun: This is the house *which* I bought.
[(1) *Which* introduces the clause *which I bought;* (2) *which* relates this clause to the preceding clause *This is the house;* (3) *which* functions, in the clause which it introduces, as a pronoun, the object of the verb *bought.*]

Relative adverb: This is the house *where* I live.
[(1) *Where* introduces the clause *where I live;* (2) *where* relates this clause to the preceding clause *This is the house;* (3) *where* functions, in the clause which it introduces, as an adverb, modifying the verb *live.*]

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[14] See pp. 113-114, 199.

Other examples of relative adverbs are:

Tell me the reason *why* you did not come.
There came a time *when* he thought he could not go on.
Show me *wherein* I am wrong.
I told him *how* he could best accomplish his purpose.
He took work *wherever* he could find it.

Relative adverbs differ from conjunctive adverbs (see *c* above) in that they introduce *subordinate* clauses, whereas conjunctive adverbs act as connectives between *principal* clauses.[15]

Examples: Relative adverb: Is this the place *where* the accident occurred?
(*Where* introduces the subordinate clause *where the accident occurred.*)
Conjunctive adverb: The accident proved fatal; *therefore* he was accused of manslaughter.
(*Therefore* connects the two principal clauses *The accident proved fatal* and *he was accused of manslaughter.*)

***Warning:* Distinguish between an adjective and an adverb.** Consider the following sentences:

Wrong: The rose smells *sweetly.*
Right: The rose smells *sweet.*

If we wish to describe the noun *rose,* we must use an adjective; *sweet* is an adjective. *Sweetly,* being an adverb, cannot modify the noun *rose;* it modifies *smells.* Therefore *sweet* is correct.

Two tests have been proposed to determine whether an adjective or an adverb should be used. First, does the modifier belong to the subject or the verb? Second, may some form of the verb *to be* be substituted for the verb without changing the essential thought of the sentence? That is, in our sentence above, may we substitute *is* for *smells*? Since the substitution is possible, the adjective *sweet* is correct.[16]

The failure to distinguish between an adverb and an adjective sometimes leads to other errors. For example:

Good and **well.** *Good* is always used as an adjective; *well* may be used as either an adjective or an adverb, according to its meaning in the sentence. As an adjective, it means, usually, *healthy;* as an adverb, it means *favorably, rightly, worthily, properly.* The following sentences are correct:

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[15] For the distinction between principal and subordinate clauses, see pp. 114-119.

[16] See Mason Long, *The New College Grammar.* New York: The Ronald Press, 1935, pp. 166-177.

> The cake is good.
> The cake looks good.
> She looks well. (adjective)
> The oven bakes well. (adverb)

6. **Prepositions.** A preposition is a word used with a noun (or noun-equivalent), called its object, to show the relation between that object and some other words in the sentence. In the following sentence *with* is used as a preposition: *He milked the cow with the crumpled horn. Horn* is the object of the preposition; *the* and *crumpled* are adjectives modifying *horn.* The whole phrase, *with the crumpled horn,* is called a "prepositional phrase." It modifies the noun *cow.*

There are two kinds of prepositions:

a. Simple: as, *by, in, from, of, to.*
b. Phrasal: as, *according to, by means of, because of.*

Warning: **(1)** Note that a great deal of the trouble encountered in using prepositions is caused by the existence of certain fixed idiomatic phrases. A few of the more common phrases are listed in the Glossary of Faulty Diction, pp. 259-268.

(2) Guard against the excessive use of prepositions to join ideas. (See pp. 228-229.)

7. **Conjunctions.** A conjunction is a word which conjoins, or connects, sentences, clauses, phrases, or words in order to form larger or more complicated sentence elements. Conjunctions are of four kinds:

a. Coördinating conjunctions connect elements of equal grammatical value—*i.e.,* a word with a word, a phrase with a phrase, a clause with a clause—as, "bread and butter," "To be or not to be," "Give me liberty or give me death." The coördinating conjunctions are *and, but, for, or, nor,* and *neither.*[17]

b. Subordinating conjunctions introduce a subordinate or dependent clause (see pp. 115-118),—as "*When* you are ready, I shall come"; "*If* it rains, we cannot go"; "We were late *because* he did not arrive on time."

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[17] For *so, then,* and *yet,* see p. 142, n. 3.

Some of the more usual subordinating conjunctions are: *when, before, after, until, since, where, because, as, that* (*i.e., in order that*), *so that, if, unless, though, although, as if.* (A complete list will be found on p. 117.)

c. Conjunctive adverbs, adverbs which also serve as conjunctions—as, *therefore, however, yet.* (These have already been treated on p. 73, see also pp. 155, 172.)

d. Correlatives, coördinating conjunctions which are distinguished by the fact that they always occur in pairs—as, *either . . . or; neither . . . nor; both . . . and; not only . . . but also; the one . . . the other; on the one hand . . . on the other hand; as . . . so; as . . . as.*

Examples: *Either* you *or* I must do it.
He looked *neither* to the right *nor* to the left.
He *both* looked *and* acted tired.
As a man thinketh in his heart, *so* is he.

8. Interjections. An interjection is a word or group of words used to express emotion. An interjection, unlike the other parts of speech, has no grammatical function in the sentence in which it is used. Although interjections are usually considered distinct parts of speech, just like nouns or verbs, some of the other parts of speech are often used as interjections.

Examples: *Ah! Oh!* (interjections)
Excellent! (adjective used as interjection)
Never! (adverb used as interjection)

Exercise 9. Parts of Speech

Give the part of speech of each word in the following sentences:

1. The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time.—THOMAS JEFFERSON
2. These are the times that try men's souls.—THOMAS PAINE
3. I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience.—PATRICK HENRY
4. There never was a good war or a bad peace.—BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
5. The pot calls the kettle black.—MIGUEL DE CERVANTES
6. Speak the truth and shame the Devil.—FRANÇOIS RABELAIS
7. I know everything except myself.—FRANÇOIS VILLON
8. Reason is not measured by size or height, but by principle.—EPICTETUS

9. They see nothing wrong in the rule that to the victors belong the spoils of the enemy.—William L. Marcy
10. Vanity dies hard; in some obstinate cases it outlives the man.—Robert Louis Stevenson
11. Those who treat politics and morality apart will never understand the one or the other.—John, Viscount Morley
12. Life comes before literature, as the material always comes before the work. The hills are full of marble before the world blooms with statues.—Phillips Brooks
13. The cruelest lies are often told in silence.—Robert Louis Stevenson
14. No laws, however stringent, can make the idle industrious, the thriftless provident, or the drunken sober.—Samuel Smiles
15. In came Mrs. Fezziwig, one vast substantial smile.—Charles Dickens
16. I will sit down now, but the time will come when you will hear me. —Benjamin Disraeli
17. Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle which fits them all.—Oliver Wendell Holmes
18. What we anticipate seldom occurs; what we least expect generally happens.—Benjamin Disraeli
19. Discontent is the want of self-reliance; it is infirmity of will.—Ralph Waldo Emerson
20. Martin, if dirt was trumps, what hands you would hold!—Charles Lamb
21. Thank God for tea! What would the world do without tea?—how did it exist? I am glad I was not born before tea.—Sydney Smith
22. There is, however, a limit at which forbearance ceases to be a virtue. —Edmund Burke
23. Handsome is that handsome does.—Oliver Goldsmith
24. He is not only dull himself, but the cause of dullness in others. —Samuel Johnson
25. If he does really think that there is no distinction between virtue and vice, why, sir, when he leaves our houses let us count our spoons. —Samuel Johnson

Exercise 10. Words That Function as Various Parts of Speech

After consulting the dictionary, compose sentences in which:

1. *Work* is used as (a) a noun; (b) a transitive verb; (c) an intransitive verb.
2. *Play* is used as (a) a transitive verb; (b) an intransitive verb; (c) a noun.
3. *Proof* is used as (a) a noun; (b) an adjective.
4. *Rest* is used as (a) a noun; (b) a transitive verb; (c) an intransitive verb.
5. *Some* is used as (a) an adjective; (b) a pronoun.
6. *Since* is used as (a) an adverb; (b) a preposition; (c) a conjunction.
7. *Thin* is used as (a) an adjective; (b) an adverb; (c) a transitive verb; (d) an intransitive verb.

8. *Only* is used as (a) an adjective; (b) an adverb; (c) a conjunction.
9. *Up* is used as (a) an adverb; (b) a preposition; (c) an adjective.
10. *While* is used as (a) a noun; (b) a conjunction; (c) a verb.
11. *So* is used as (a) an adverb; (b) a conjunction; (c) an interjection.
12. *After* is used as (a) a conjunction; (b) a preposition; (c) an adverb.
13. *Like* is used as (a) a verb; (b) an adjective; (c) a noun; (d) a preposition.
14. *But* is used as (a) a preposition; (b) a conjunction; (c) an adverb.
15. *For* is used as (a) a preposition; (b) a conjunction.
16. *Before* is used as (a) an adverb; (b) a preposition; (c) a conjunction.
17. *As* is used as (a) a conjunction; (b) a relative pronoun; (c) an adverb.
18. *Yet* is used as (a) an adverb; (b) a conjunction.
19. *That* is used as (a) a demonstrative pronoun; (b) a pronominal adjective; (c) a conjunction; (d) a relative pronoun.
20. *Regarding* is used as (a) a participle; (b) a preposition.
21. *Until* is used as (a) a conjunction; (b) a preposition.
22. *Then* is used as (a) an adverb; (b) an adjective; (c) a conjunction; (d) a noun.
23. *Considering* is used as (a) a participle; (b) a preposition.
24. *Either* is used as (a) a pronoun; (b) an adjective; (c) a conjunction.
25. *Which* is used as (a) a relative pronoun; (b) an interrogative pronoun; (c) a relative adjective.

CHAPTER III
(Continued)

GRAMMAR

B. CASE

CASE is the grammatical property of a noun or pronoun by which we show its function in the sentence. For example, if a pronoun is used as the subject of a modal verb, we denote that relationship by putting the pronoun in the nominative case. Similarly, if a pronoun is used as the object of a verb, that relationship is shown by employing the objective case.

In Old English there were six cases, corresponding roughly to the six cases of the Latin language. Since both nouns and pronouns were inflected, their cases could be determined by observing the case-endings.

In modern English only three cases survive—the nominative, the possessive (or genitive), and the objective. Case-endings, too, have tended to disappear, with the result that nouns have the same form in both the nominative and the objective cases, although they have a separate form for the possessive case. Many pronouns, however, retain three separate forms for the three cases. For example, the noun *man* might be in either the nominative or objective case; but the pronoun *he* is the nominative form, *him* the objective, and *his* the possessive.

1. Nominative case. The chief uses of the nominative case are as follows:

a. Subject of a verb.

Examples: *John* arrived last night.
He had driven all day.
John, who is my friend, lives here. (two nominatives)

b. Predicate complement. A predicate complement in the nominative case follows the verb *to be* (or another copulative verb[1]) and completes—*i.e.,* modifies, describes, or qualifies—the subject. It may be a noun or noun-equivalent, or an adjective (called a predicate adjective [2]).

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[1] See p. 81.

Examples: John is a *man.*
It is *he;* it is not *I.*
He is *tall.*

Sometimes other copulative (linking) verbs perform the same function as *to be,* linking the subject with a predicate complement. These verbs are of four classes:

(1) Verbs like *call, make,* etc., which in the passive take predicate complements.

Examples: The baby was called *Peter.*
He was made *president* of his class.

(2) Verbs like *seem* and *become,* which usually require a complement to complete their meaning.

Examples: He became a *recluse.*
He seemed *what he pretended to be.*

(3) Verbs like *appear, remain,* etc., which in some uses are followed by a complement.

Examples: He appeared *calm.*
He remained *what he always had been.*

(4) Verbs of sensation like *feel, smell,* and *taste,* which sometimes require a complement to complete their meaning.

Examples: He feels *sick.*
The toast smells *burned.*
The orange tasted *sour.*

c. Appositive. An appositive is a word, or group of words, which is set next to another word and denotes the same person or thing. A word standing in apposition with a noun in the nominative case is also in the nominative case.

Example: Mr. Jones, our *friend,* is here.

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[2] Although an adjective is not inflected, and therefore has no case, the predicate adjective is, for purposes of convenience, treated here.

d. Direct address. A noun or pronoun denoting the person, place, or thing addressed is in the nominative case (also called the vocative).

Example: John, come here.

e. Nominative absolute. This construction is a combination of a participle with a noun or pronoun in the nominative case. The construction is regarded as grammatically independent of the rest of the sentence. (See p. 104.)

2. Possessive case. The possessive case is used to denote possession. Nouns and pronouns are inflected in the possessive case.

a. Rules for forming the possessive case.

(1) In the singular, usually adds *'s*—as, *John's, cow's, Charles V's court.*[3]

(2) In the plural:

(a) If the plural ends in *s,* add the apostrophe (')—as, *cows'.*

(b) If the plural does not end in *s,* add *'s*—as, *men's.*

(3) In forming the possessive case of pronouns (except indefinite pronouns) no apostrophe is ever used.

Example: its, theirs, his, hers. (*It's* is a contraction of *it is;* the apostrophe stands for the omitted *i* in *is.*)

(4) For indefinite pronouns, the following forms are correct: *someone's, one's, no one's, anyone's, everyone's, somebody's, nobody's, everybody's.*

(5) *Else.* When *else* is used in conjunction with *someone, everyone, nobody,* and *who,* the following forms are sanctioned by the best usage: *someone else's, everyone else's, nobody else's.* But *whose else* is considered, in formal writing, preferable to *who else's.*

(6) When a singular noun ending in *s* or *ce* is followed by a noun beginning with the letter *s,* the apostrophe (') alone is added. Thus, *Santa Claus'* success; for *conscience'* sake.

(7) In compound nouns, or in instances where a group of words forms a sense unit, the *'s* is appended to the last word

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[3] In forming the possessive case of proper names usage is divided. The following forms are sanctioned:

I went to *Charles's* (or *Charles'*) party.
I saw him at the *Jones's* (or *Jones'*) house.

of the compound or of the group. Thus, the *King of England's* birthday; my *sister-in-law's* husband; in a *year or two's* time; *all the other people's* choice. Such constructions are frequently awkward and should, when possible, be avoided in formal writing. For example, write *the choice of all the other people* instead of *all the other people's choice.*

(8) When two possessors are mentioned, one in apposition to the other, either one or both may be made possessive; if, however, the object possessed follows the second noun, that noun must be in the possessive. Thus, each of the following is correct:

Examples: She is at *Miss Smith's,* the *dressmaker's.*
She is at *Miss Smith's,* the dressmaker.
She is at *Miss Smith's, the dressmaker's* SHOP. (Here *dressmaker* must be made possessive because it is followed by *shop.*)

b. Rules governing the use of the possessive case.

(1) Nouns naming inanimate objects usually form the possessive by an *of*-phrase. Thus, *the chimney of the house* is preferable to *the house's chimney.*

Certain idiomatic expressions are exceptions to the rule: *for pity's sake, day's journey, year's time, heart's content, week's wages, stone's throw, money's worth, wit's end, harm's way,* etc.

(2) A noun or pronoun logically modifying a gerund should be in the possessive case. The gerund is a verbal noun (see p. 103) and, if modified, must be modified by a noun or pronoun in the possessive case. Let us take two examples:

(x) I was amazed at *John's* singing (at the quality of his singing).
(y) I was amazed at *John* singing (that he sang).

In (x) it will be noted that *singing* is the logical object of *amazed at*—that is, I was amazed at the *singing.* Since *singing* is a gerund (verbal noun, see p. 103), the noun which modifies it must be in the possessive case.

In (y) *John* is the logical object of *amazed at*—that is, I was amazed at *John* when he sang. *John* does not logically modify *singing;* rather, *singing* modifies *John.* (In this sentence *singing* is a verbal adjective, or participle. See p. 104.)

When there is any doubt as to whether the possessive or objective case of a noun or pronoun should be used, the two following tests will prove helpful:

(a) Ask the question, "What was I amazed at? Was it John or the singing?" If the answer is "John," John is the logical object and should be in the objective case. If the answer is "Singing," *singing* is the logical object and should be modified by the possessive *John's*.

(b) For *John* or *John's* substitute a pronoun. Should the pronoun be *him* or *his?* Few of us would make the mistake of saying "I was amazed at *him* singing" if we meant "I was amazed at *his* singing."

An exception occurs if the noun which would logically be in the possessive case is itself modified by a phrase intervening between the noun and gerund.

Example: If you can do this without *the policeman on the corner seeing you,* you will succeed. (If the phrase *on the corner* did not intervene between *policeman* and *seeing,* the logical form would be the possessive, *policeman's.*)

(3) An *of*-phrase should usually be used instead of the possessive to name the object of an action implied by a noun.

Right: the passage of the bill; the assassination of Garfield; the study of the subject.
Wrong: the bill's passage; Garfield's assassination; the subject's study.

In each of these examples, the noun implies action: *to pass, to assassinate, to study*. The objects of these implied actions—*the bill, Garfield,* and *the subject*—should be expressed by an *of*-phrase rather than by the possessive case.

(4) If two names connected by *and* represent persons who are joint possessors or who are associated in a common activity, only the second name is put in the possessive case. If the possession or activity is separate, both names take the possessive case.

Examples: *William and Mary's* reign was prosperous.
John and Mary's mother is coming.
We study *Loomis and Clark's* anthology.
Shakespeare's and *Milton's* works are in our library.
John's and *Mary's* mothers are coming.

(5) Two possessives, one phrasal and the other the possessive form, can be employed to denote ownership—as "Here is a book *of my father's*." Occasionally, this construction is employed to prevent misreading.

Examples: This is a picture *of the king.*
(No idea of possession is involved. *Of* does not here denote ownership.)
This is a picture *of the king's.*
(The idea of ownership is conveyed by the double possessive.)

3. Objective case.

a. Nouns in the objective case have the same form as in the nominative. Some pronouns, however, change their form.

Examples: him, her, them, whom, me, us, and *whomever* are in the objective case.

b. The chief uses of the objective case are as follows:

(1) *To denote the direct object of a transitive verb.*

Examples: He saw the *man.*
Mary saw *him* (*her, them, me,* etc.).
He is the man *whom* I mentioned.

(2) *To denote the indirect object of a transitive verb.* The indirect object (English equivalent of the Latin dative case) names the *indirect* receiver of the action of the verb. Thus, in the sentence *I gave Mary the chair, Mary* is the indirect object; *chair* is the direct object.

The indirect receiver may be denoted by a *to-* phrase. Thus, *I gave a chair to Mary.* When the indirect object is expressed by the objective case, it precedes the direct object; when the indirect object is expressed by a *to-* phrase, it usually follows the direct object.

Examples: He told *us* his adventures.
He told his adventures *to us.*

(3) *To denote the retained object.* When an active verb is made passive, the direct object, instead of becoming the subject of the passive verb, may be "retained." The indirect object becomes the subject. This construction is, of course, an anomaly, since it is impossible for a passive verb to have a direct object.

Active: John gave Henry a book. (*Book* is the direct object.)
Passive: Henry was given a book. (*Book* is retained as "direct object." *Henry,* the indirect object in the first sentence, becomes the subject.)

(4) *To denote an objective complement.* An objective complement has two functions: first, it helps to complete the verb (hence the term *complement*); and second, it helps to explain or describe the direct object (hence the term *objective*).

Examples: They elected him *president.*
They proved him *wrong.*

The nature of the objective complement may be seen if we examine the two functions just mentioned. Let us write the examples in another way:

They *elected-president* him.
They *proved-wrong* him.

It will be seen that *president* and *wrong* not only help the verb to express action but also help to explain or describe the direct object, *him.*

(5) *To denote the object of a preposition.*

Examples: I had no faith in *her.*
I gave it to *him.*

(6) *To denote the object of a participle, gerund, or infinitive.*[4]

Examples: Making a *bow,* he left the room. (object of participle)
Studying *English* is difficult. (object of gerund)
To enjoy *health* is a blessing. (object of infinitive)

(7) *To denote the appositive of a noun or pronoun in the objective case.*

Example: I gave it to my lawyer, *Mr. White.*

(8) To denote the predicate complement when a copulative verb [5] is preceded by a noun or pronoun in the objective case.

Examples: You did not expect the guest to be *him.*
I supposed the real culprits to be *them.*

---

[4] Many authorities state that the objective case is also used to denote the subject of an infinitive—as, I believe *him* to be honest. For another explanation, see the infinitive used as objective complement, p. 109.

[5] See pp. 80-81.

C. CASE—SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES WITH PRONOUNS

Since the chief troubles with case occur in the use of pronouns, a few difficulties have been set aside for special consideration.

Failure to understand the functions of the three cases is evidenced by the frequent misuse of pronouns, since many of the pronouns have special forms for the objective case, whereas nouns do not. In the sentence, *He gave the book to John and Jack,* we do not need to know that *John* and *Jack* are in the objective case. But once we change the sentence to read, *He gave the book to John and me,* we must know that *me* is in the objective case; otherwise we might commit the error of saying, *He gave the book to John and I.*

The chief problems arise in using the following classes of pronouns:

1. **Personal pronouns.** These pronouns are used in the same constructions as nouns. If the student knows his grammar thus far, he will encounter no unusual difficulties. (See example above.)

2. **Intensive pronouns.** These pronouns take the same case as the words which they intensify. (The nominative and objective cases have similar forms.)

Examples: I did it *myself.* (*I* and *myself* are both in the nominative case.)
She saw Henry *himself.* (*Henry* and *himself* are both in the objective case.)

3. **Reflexive pronouns.** These pronouns denote the object of the action of a verb when that object is the same as the subject. Therefore reflexive pronouns are always in the objective case.

Examples: He saw *himself* in the mirror.
The problem settled *itself* automatically.

4. **Relative pronouns.** Here we encounter the greatest difficulty. *A relative pronoun has three functions:*

a. Like a personal pronoun, it stands for a noun.

b. Like a conjunction, it connects a clause (a relative clause) with another clause.

c. Like a noun, it has a function in the clause in which it stands.

Let us consider the following sentences:

(x) He is the man *who* came yesterday.
(y) He is the man *whom* you mentioned.
(z) This is the book of *which* you spoke.
(xx) He is the man to *whom* you introduced me.
(yy) This is the book *which* he left.
(zz) He is not the man *whom* I thought him to be.

The threefold function of the relative pronoun can be seen by examining the first sentence:

Who, like a personal pronoun, stands for *man.*

Who, like a conjunction, joins the clause *who came yesterday* to the preceding clause.

Who, like a noun, has a function in the clause in which it stands; it is the subject of *came.*

So also:

In (y) *whom* is the object of *mentioned.*
In (z) *which* is the object of the preposition *of.*
In (xx) *whom* is the object of the preposition *to.*
In (yy) *which* is the object of *left.*
In (zz) *whom* is the objective complement of the infinitive *to be.* (I thought *him* to be *whom.*)

The rules which govern the relative pronoun are as follows: (1) It agrees with its antecedent in gender and number. (2) Its case is determined by its function ***in the clause in which it stands.***

Warning: **Sentences with the following typical constructions present difficulties:**

(x) This is not the man *who* you said would come.
(y) Smith is the man *who* I thought would be elected.
(z) Speak to *whoever* pleases you.

We must remember that the case of the relative pronoun is determined by its function in the clause in which it stands. In (x) *who* is the subject of *would come; you said* is regarded as parenthetical, as if the sentence had been written, *This is not the man who (you said) would come.*

Similarly, in (y) *who* is the subject of *would be elected. I thought* is regarded as parenthetical.

In (z) *whoever* is the subject of *pleases*. The clause *whoever pleases you* is the object of the preposition *to*.

5. Interrogative pronouns. These pronouns are similar to relative pronouns in form, but differ in use. They are employed to introduce direct and indirect questions. Like relative pronouns, their case is determined *by their function in the clause in which they stand.*

Examples: *Who* are you? (direct question)
He asked *who* you were. (indirect question)
Whom do you mean? (direct question)[6]
He asked *whom* you meant. (indirect question)

Exercise 11. Parsing

(1) Review the part of speech of each word in Exercise 9 (p. 77).

(2) Tell *specifically* how each word is used.

Exercise 12. Case

Point out the errors of case form in the following sentences and supply the correct form, giving the reason for your change (not all the case forms are incorrect):

1. Who did you hear say that?
2. I did not like John acting that way.
3. I knew the girl to be she.
4. Ever since I began its study, I have found English very interesting.
5. I did not see the person whom you said would be there.
6. I saw the person who you mentioned.
7. I met him at Mrs. Holcomb's, our landlady, house.
8. He gave six reasons for a person liking a poem.
9. The tree's bark is very tough.
10. I did not like the rules and saw no reason for their observance.
11. Say that you will come with she and I.
12. This is the man whom you believed stole your coat.
13. When they looked in the mirror, they scarcely knew theirselves.
14. I knew immediately that it was him.
15. The book is not mine; I do not know whose else's it might be.
16. The book's jacket was gaily decorated.
17. He is not the kind of man who you would imagine would do that.
18. With him and me accompanying you, you need fear no danger.

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[6] In colloquial English we frequently hear, "*Who* do you mean?" and "*Who* are you looking for?" This use of the nominative case is not sanctioned, however, in formal writing.

19. Give the message to whomever answers the door.
20. There is no need of your friend going with me.
21. Mr. Rice is the man who you should give it to.
22. The book is stupid; I can see no reason for it's popularity.
23. The Joneses' house is brightly lighted.
24. I was delighted at Ronald coming to see me.
25. Who do you suppose I saw there?

CHAPTER III
(Concluded)

GRAMMAR

D. VERBS

A VERB has person, number, voice, tense, and mood.

1. Person. A verb has three persons—first, second, and third—both in the singular and in the plural. The first person denotes the speaker or writer; the second person denotes the person, place, or thing addressed; the third person denotes the person, place, or thing referred to.

a. The verb agrees with its subject in person.

Examples: Wrong: You (second person) was (first or third person) there.
Right: You *were* there.

b. In commands, the implied subject of the verb is in the second person, either singular or plural.

Examples: (You) Come, John.
(You) Forward, march!

2. Number.

a. A verb has two numbers—singular and plural.

b. A verb agrees with its subject in number as well as in person. If the subject is singular, the verb should be singular; if the subject is plural, the verb should be plural.

(1) The verb agrees with its subject in number even if the subject follows the verb.

Example: On the table *are* five cards.

(2) The verb agrees with the subject, not with the predicate complement. (See pp. 80-81.)

Example: The reason for my leaving *was* the large crowds.

c. The following rules govern the number of the subject:

SINGULAR

(1) A compound subject considered as a unit is singular.

Example: Bread and butter *is* fattening.

(2) The indefinite pronouns *each, either, neither, one, no one, everyone, everybody, anyone, anybody, someone, somebody* are singular.

Examples: Each of us *holds* the same opinion.
Everyone *shows* his true worth in an emergency.
One *appreciates* the greatness of Shakespeare.

(a) But when *each* stands in apposition to each member of a compound subject, the verb is plural.

Example: England, Germany, and France each *refuse* to compromise.

(b) But when *each* and *every* modify coördinate nouns considered individually, the verb is singular.

Example: Each boy and each girl *has* been given a chance.
Every coat and every hat *was* on its proper hook.

(3) A compound subject composed of *singular* elements joined by *or* or *nor* is singular.

Example: Neither he nor she *dares* to do it.

(a) When the elements are both plural, the verb is plural.

Example: Either the boys or their fathers *were* to blame.

(b) When one of the correlative elements is singular and the other plural, the verb agrees with the nearer element.

Examples: Mary or the boys *were* to blame.
Neither his cousins nor their father *was* able to be there.
Were your parents or he at the concert?

(4) The expletive *it* is always followed by a singular verb, whether the subject of the sentence is singular or plural.

Example: It *is* constant excuses that annoy me.

(For the rule applicable to the expletive *there,* see p. 94.)

(5) Plural nouns of measurement (weight, distance, etc.) and numbers are singular.

Examples: Two quarts of milk *is* all we need.
Two dollars *is* the amount of the tax.
Two plus two *is* four.
Nine times two *is* eighteen.
But note: Two *and* two *are* four. (compound subject)

PLURAL

d. The following subjects are considered plural:

(1) Expressions such as *a number of* (*i.e.,* several), *the rest of, the remainder of, a part of,* when followed by plural nouns, are plural.

Examples: A number of my friends *were* here.
The rest of the men *are* content.
A part of the cake *was* left. (*A part of* followed by a singular noun)

(2) *Proceeds, riches, scissors, shears,* and such nouns are plural.

SINGULAR OR PLURAL

e. Some subjects may be considered as singular or plural, according to circumstances. The following rules apply:

(1) A relative pronoun used as subject is singular if its antecedent is singular; plural if its antecedent is plural.

Examples: He is the kind of man who *is* always busy.
Teachers do not like the kind of students who *are* always giving excuses.

(2) The number of the subject, whether singular or plural, is not affected if it is followed by a phrase introduced by *with, together with, as well as, accompanied by, including, no less than, in addition to,* etc.

Examples: I, as well as my friends, *am* coming.
Mr. and Mrs. Smith, with their friend, *are* here.

(3) Collective nouns, such as *jury, committee, family, public, audience, crowd,* are singular if they represent a group considered

as a unit, but plural if they designate the individuals comprising the group.

Examples: The jury *is* rendering *its* verdict.
The jury *are* eating *their* dinner.

(4) Following the expletive *there* the verb is singular or plural according to the subject which follows it. (Note that the expletive *it* is always followed by a singular verb. See p. 92.)

Examples: There *is* a *book* on the table.
There *are* two *books* on the table.

(5) *None, most,* and *some* take either a singular or plural verb according to their meaning. If they are modified by a plural phrase, they are usually considered as plural.

Examples: Some of the men *are* here.
Some of the money *is* lost.
None of our friends *were* hurt.
None of the butter *is* spoiled.
None (*i.e.,* no one) *is* so dull as not to see the point.

(6) Nouns ending in *ics,* such as *athletics, mathematics,* and *ethics,* are singular for the name of a science strictly so used; plural for those names more loosely used (often preceded by *his, the*).

Examples: Mathematics *is* an exact science.
His mathematics *are* poor.

Warning: **(1) Do not allow the number of the verb to be changed by being attracted to a noun intervening between the subject and the verb.** This error most frequently occurs when a phrase or clause comes between the subject and the verb.

Examples: The sound of many of the words in the poem *produces* a musical effect. (The subject is *sound,* which is singular.)
This condition also indicated that the entire economic life of the people *was* in great disorder. (The subject of *was* is *life.*)

(2) Avoid the ungrammatical *it don't, she don't, he don't.* In each instance the subject is third person singular; the verb must agree in both person and number. In each expression above, *doesn't* is correct.

Exercise 13. Number

Correct the following sentences where necessary, giving the reason for your change (not all of the sentences are incorrect):

1. Each of us were pleased with the result.
2. He is the kind of man who don't seem useful in the office.
3. Gone was the interest and joy in my old position.
4. She studied economics, which were a very useful subject.
5. A number of them has gone on a picnic.
6. The dog and the cat each was sitting by the fire.
7. My family has gone out to dinner.
8. The production of automobiles, together with the manufacture of tires, have increased tremendously.
9. Rhythm, simplicity, and a free use of words that seem to roll off the end of one's tongue marks the style of the poem.
10. It are his manners that annoy me.
11. I saw a number of men who was working on the road.
12. None of them are in a position to judge the matter fairly.
13. I like the type of students who is interested in their work.
14. His state of mind and his general attitude toward his work annoys me.
15. There is a number of people who would not agree with me.
16. The audience were unanimous in their approval.
17. Of all the institutions in this country none have been held more sacred than the Supreme Court.
18. The rest of the family is coming on the next train.
19. The style of the author, as well as the types of characters he portrays, are very distasteful to me.
20. The fruit on the trees which grows in the vicinity of our house attract many small boys.

(3) Voice. As has been noted (see p. 71), there are two voices, active and passive. The active voice represents the subject as acting; the passive voice represents the subject as acted upon.

Active	*Passive*
He gave her a book.	A book was given (to) her by him. *or* She was given a book by him.

In the first sentence above, when the active verb (*gave*) is made passive, the object (*book*) becomes the subject of the verb in the passive voice. The subject (*He*) of the active verb (*gave*) becomes the agent (*i.e., by him*). The indirect object remains as indirect object.

In the second sentence above, the indirect object (*her*) of the active verb (*gave*) becomes the subject of the passive verb. The direct object (*book*) of the active verb (*gave*) becomes what is called the *retained object* of the passive verb. (See p. 85.)

Warning: **Avoid the weak passive voice.**

(1) The passive voice is less used than the active. The chief reason is that it is likely to be weak and indirect.

> *Examples: Strong sentence:* I gave no special attention to the study of English.
> *Weak sentence:* No special attention was given to the study of English by me.

It can be easily seen that the second sentence is an indirect and weak method of expressing a simple idea. The logical core, or center, of the idea is *I;* but *I* has been relegated to the position of the weak phrase *by me.*

The best test as to whether to use an active or passive verb is to determine what is the logical center of the idea to be expressed. If that "center" is acting, use the active voice; if acted upon, use the passive voice.

But suppose that in the example above the writer had been discussing a high school curriculum, and had been mentioning the various subjects to which attention was paid. It would then be preferable to say, *No special attention was given to the study of English.* In this sentence the writer (*I*) has ceased to be important, and emphasis is now placed on *attention,* which, in this instance, is acted upon (*i.e.,* passive).

(2) Needless shifting of voice within a sentence produces a similar effect of weakness and indirection.

> *Examples: Strong:* Since the subject was easy for me, I developed a tendency toward laziness.
> *Weak:* Since the subject was easy for me, a tendency toward laziness was developed.

Keep the logical center of the sentence dominant as much as possible throughout the sentence; then the weak passives will tend to disappear. (In this connection see also Point of View, pp. 202-204.)

4. Tense.

a. Two classifications of verbs. In considering tense, we may conveniently make two classifications of verbs:

(1) *Strong and weak verbs.* Strong verbs are those which form their past tense by an internal vowel change. *Arise* and *blow,* because their past tenses are, respectively, *arose* and *blew,* are strong verbs. Weak verbs, on the other hand, form their past tense by adding a suffix ending in *d* or *t. Deal* and *fold* are weak verbs: their past tenses are, respectively, *dealt* and *folded.*

(2) *Principal and auxiliary verbs.* All verbs which are not auxiliary verbs are principal verbs. An auxiliary verb helps a principal verb form the various tenses, moods, and voices. In the following sentences the principal verbs are printed in italics, the auxiliary verbs in capitals.

Examples: We WERE *going.*
He WILL HAVE BEEN *executed* by next Sunday.
We MAY *go.*
I DO *assure* you that I *am* right.
I SHALL *go* if he WILL *come* for me.

It will be noted that the same verb may be used as both an auxiliary and a principal verb.[1] Three of the auxiliary verbs in the previous sentences are used, in the following sentences, as principal verbs:

We *were* tired.
He *had* a cold.
I *do* my work in the morning.

b. Principal parts of a verb. (1) The first person singular of the present tense, (2) the first person singular of the past (or preterit) tense, and (3) the past participle are called the principal parts of a verb.[2] Below are listed the principal parts of a strong and a weak verb:

	Present	*Past (or Preterit)*	*Past Participle*
Strong:	drink	drank	drunk
Weak:	live	lived	lived

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[1] If the verb *to be* is used as a modal verb, it must be repeated, not implied, when used as an auxiliary verb in the same sentence. See page 211.

[2] By some authorities the present infinitive is also included as one of the principal parts.

By consulting a dictionary we can readily learn the principal parts of any verb. For example, *Webster's New International Dictionary* (2nd edition) contains the following entry under the verb *see*. (For the sake of simplicity the derivations and the symbols for pronunciation have been omitted.)

> SEE, *v.; past tense,* SAW; *past part.* SEEN; *pres. part. and verbal n.* SEEING. *Transitive: . . . Intransitive: . . .*

Thus we can conclude that *see* is both a transitive and intransitive verb, the principal parts of which are *see, saw, seen.* We learn in addition that the present participle and verbal noun (gerund) are *seeing.*

Under the verb *seal* we find the following entry:

> SEAL, *v.;* SEALED; SEALING. *Transitive: . . .*

From this we learn that *seal* is a transitive verb, the principal parts of which are *seal, sealed, sealed,* and that the present participle and verbal noun (gerund) are *sealing.*

Exercise 14. Principal Parts of Verbs

Look up in the dictionary and write out the principal parts of the following verbs: *begin, can* (able), *cost, crow, deal, dive, dwell, hang* (a man), *kneel, lay, learn, lie, may, pay, prove, raise, rise, set, sit, sleep, smell, spell, spoil, travel.*

c. Formation of tenses. Tense is a modification in the form of a verb to denote distinctions of time. Principal verbs form their tenses both by changes in the form of the verbs and also by the help of auxiliary verbs.

d. The six leading tenses:

(1) *Present tense:*

(a) Denotes present action, being, or condition.

Examples: He *studies.*
She *is* my mother.
Two times three *equals* six.

(b) May denote a past action or condition (historical present).

Example: Now *begins* an extraordinary contest between a man and an army. Our horseman, now within a quarter of a mile of the crest, suddenly *wheels* to the left and *gallops* in a direction parallel to it. He has caught sight of his antagonist; he *knows* all.—AMBROSE BIERCE

(c) May denote future action or condition.

Examples: Stop when the whistle *blows.*
I *begin* work tomorrow.

(d) May denote universal truth.

Example: Man *is* mortal.

(2) *Present perfect tense:*

(a) May denote an action or condition just completed.

Example: He *has come* home today.

(b) May denote a past action or condition not yet completed.

Example: The man *has been studying* for hours.

(3) *Past* (or *preterit*) *tense:* denotes an action or condition, whether completed or uncompleted.

Example: He *came* home yesterday.

(4) *Past perfect* (or *pluperfect*) *tense:* denotes a past action or condition completed before another action occurred.

Example: He *had studied* grammar before he entered college.

(5) *Future tense:* denotes an action or condition to take place in future time.

Example: He *will come* tomorrow.

(6) *Future perfect tense:* denotes an action or condition to be completed in the future.

Example: I *shall have finished* by the time you come.[3]

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[3] For this use of the present tense, see *d* (1) (c), above.

e. Progressive and emphatic forms. Two other tense forms of the verb should be noted—the progressive and emphatic.

(1) To denote progressive or continuous action: *be* + the present participle. This progressive action may be expressed in all tenses in both the active and passive voice, indicative and subjunctive[4] moods.

Examples: I *am helping* with the work. (present progressive, indicative, active)
I *was being helped* with the work. (past progressive, indicative, passive)
I seem *to be helping* with the work. (present progressive, infinitive, active)

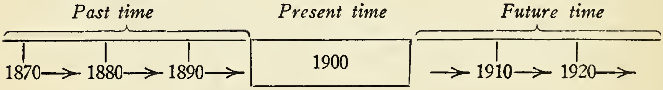
(2) To denote emphatic action: *do* + the infinitive. This use is confined to the present or past tense, indicative or subjunctive, active voice only.

Examples: I *do help* with the work. (present emphatic, indicative, active)
I *did help* with the work. (past emphatic, indicative, active)
Would that he *did not help* with the work! (present emphatic, subjunctive, active)

f. Sequence of tenses. The most frequent trouble occurs in determining the sequence of tenses when the sentence contains a verbal (see pp. 103-105), or a subordinate clause.

In general, it may be said that the tense of a verbal or of a verb in a subordinate clause is determined with reference to the time expressed by the main verb.

The following diagram and examples will help explain the relation among the various tenses. The date 1900 A.D. has been arbitrarily chosen to represent the present time. The ten-year intervals representing the past and the future are also arbitrary, for frequently only a second of time may differentiate present from past or future action.



(1) TENSES IN SUBORDINATE CLAUSES

I *see* him (1900) as I *write* (1900).
I *shall speak* to him (1920) when he *comes* (1920).[5]
He *will be gone* (1910) before I *arrive* (1920).[5]

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[4] For the subjunctive mood, see pp. 102-103.

[5] For this use of the present tense, see *d* (1) (c), p. 99.

I *have spoken* to him (1890-1900) every time he *has made* the mistake (1890-1900).
I *spoke* to him (1880) after he *had recognized* me (1870).
He *has been speaking* (1890-1900) ever since he *came* in (1880).
I *had* already *spoken* to him (1870) before he *recognized* me (1880).
By the time I *had seen* him (1870) it *was* too late to speak to him (1870-1880).

Should and *would.* When the verb of the main clause is in the past or past perfect (pluperfect) tense, *should* and *would* replace *shall* and *will,* respectively, in the subordinate clause.

I know that he *will* come.
I know that I *shall* come.
I knew that he *would* come.
I knew that I *should* come.
I *had known* for days that he *would* come.

(2) TENSES OF VERBALS

I *am happy* (1900) *to be able* to help you (1900).
I *am happy* (1900) *to have been able* to help you (1890).
I *intend* (1900) *to go* (1900-1910). (There is no future infinitive.[6])
I *intended* (1880) *to go* (1880-1900). (There is no future infinitive.[6])
I *had intended* (1870) *to go* (1870-1880). (There is no future infinitive.[6])
I *see* him (1900) *sitting* in a chair (1900).
I *saw* him (1880) *sitting* in a chair (1880).
Having sat down in a chair (1870), he *picked* up a book (1880).

Exercise 15. Tense

Correct, where necessary, the tenses of the verbs in the following sentences. If more than one verb form is permissible, differentiate between the meanings:

1. I told Mrs. Adams that Woody had arrived before I did.
2. I predict that he will have been declared ineligible by Monday.
3. The scout informed them that the Indians will be sighted shortly.
4. Geology will teach you that glaciers have covered the continent before man inhabited it.
5. I am surprised that he had not yet arrived.
6. I hoped to have gone, but business detained me.

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[6] The present infinitive, like the present indicative, may be used to denote future time. (See *d* (1) (c), p. 99.

7. Mr. John Jones regrets that he will be unable to accept the kind invitation of Mrs. Worthington Smythe.
8. John Jones regretted that he did not answer the invitation sooner.
9. It would have been just as convenient if he came the day before.
10. I shall always regret that I had not told him.
11. He made arrangements to have come yesterday.
12. I shall tell you after I shall have talked to him.
13. I asked him why he has done this.
14. He would not have come if I did not ask him.
15. Working till late the night before, he was tired the next morning.
16. Having answered the question, he would have sat down if anyone requested the floor.
17. I had planned to have left yesterday.
18. Fortune was kind to those who have courted her.
19. Your examination will have shown that you have not studied beforehand.
20. Perhaps you have not heard that I arrived yesterday.

5. Mood. There are three moods—the indicative, the subjunctive, and the imperative.

a. The indicative mood is used to express a fact—as, John *is* my friend.

b. The subjunctive mood is used to express an action or state, not as a fact, but as an uncertain or suppositional contingency. Formerly much more widely used than at present, the subjunctive mood now survives chiefly in the following uses:

(1) To express a wish.

Examples: Would that you *were* here.
"Thy kingdom *come,* thy will *be* done."

(2) To express a supposition or condition contrary to fact.

Examples: If I *were* you, I should tell him.
If he *were* here, I should be glad.

(3) After verbs or adjectives expressing command, necessity, etc.

Examples: He demanded that the rule *be* followed.
It is mandatory that he *obey* instructions.
He required that we *be* there early.
It is necessary that I *be* in New York next week.

Note: May (*might*) and *should* (*would*) are frequently used as auxiliary verbs to form the subjunctive mood.

Examples: He says that he *may* come.
He said that he *might* come.
If you *should* come, there will be a place for you.
He *would* prefer to stay at home.

c. The imperative mood expresses a command or entreaty.[7]

Examples: *Come* here.
Be sure to do it.

Exercise 16. Mood

Give the reason for the use of the subjunctive mood wherever it occurs in the following sentences. Correct any mistakes you may find. Point out any instances where the mood might vary with formal or colloquial use.

1. He ordered that we be prompt at the next meeting.
2. I wish that I might come to your party.
3. If I were not here, I should be enjoying myself.
4. He requested that everyone be quiet.
5. If his argument prove sound, I shall have to reverse my decision.
6. It is imperative that you go.
7. Might you not be mistaken?
8. If this be the truth, I have been misinformed.
9. I wish that I were home now.
10. It is essential that the manager be notified immediately.

6. Verbals. Verbals are forms of the verb which may be used as nouns or adjectives. Let us take three examples:

(x) *Studying* English is difficult.
(y) *To study* English is difficult.
(z) The man *studying* his English is my friend.

Studying and *to study* are both forms of the verb *study*. Furthermore, each takes an object, *English,* just as does the verb *study*. But in the foregoing sentences they are not used like verbs, to make an affirmation or an assertion. But because they are derived from verbs, they are called *verbals*. They are also referred to as non-modal verbs. (See p. 71.)

a. Gerund and infinitive. Let us now see how they are used. In (x), *studying* is the subject of the verb *is*. So also in (y), *to study* is the subject of *is*. But in (z), *studying* is used to modify, or to describe, *man*.

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[7] The implied subject of an imperative is *you,* singular and plural.

Since only a noun or noun-equivalent may act as the subject of a verb, we conclude that *studying,* in (x), and *to study,* in (y), are substitutes for nouns. But because they are derived from verbs, they are called *verbal nouns.*

For practical purposes it is necessary to distinguish between these two kinds of verbal nouns, *studying* and *to study.* Therefore we call the form ending in *-ing* (*studying*) a gerund; the form preceded by *to* (*to study*) we call an infinitive.[8]

b. Participles. Let us now look at example (z). Here, we noted, *studying,* though derived from the verb *study,* is not used as the subject of the verb *is,* but describes *man.* Since man is a noun, and since the only part of speech which may correctly modify a noun is an adjective, we must conclude that *studying* is here used as an adjective.

A verbal adjective is called a *participle.* Although it resembles the gerund in form, it differs in use; the gerund is used as a *noun,* the participle as an *adjective.*

A special use of the participle should be noted. This use consists of a participle in combination with a noun or pronoun to form what is called the "nominative absolute" construction—as, *The current running swiftly, he was soon carried downstream.*

This construction is not to be confused with the modifying participial phrase. In the nominative absolute, the participle qualifies the noun *within* the construction. This noun also serves as the subject of the action implied in the participle. Thus, in the foregoing sentence, *running* qualifies *current. Current* also serves as the subject of the action implied in the participle *running.*

The participial phrase, however, qualifies a noun or noun-equivalent which is outside the participial phrase itself. Thus, in the second example below, the participial phrase *running swiftly* modifies *current,* which is the subject of the main verb *carried.*

Examples: Nominative absolute: The current running swiftly, he was soon carried downstream.

Participial phrase: The current, running swiftly, soon carried him downstream.

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[8] The infinitive-sign *to* may be omitted, however, in the following instances:

(1) after verbs of *seeing, hearing,* etc.—as, *I heard him* (*to*) *speak.*

(2) after the verbs *dare, let, make, may, must, need, shall,* and *will*—as, *I must* (*to*) *go.*

(3) after *better, had better, had* or *would rather, than* (when used as either a conjunction or a preposition), and *but* (when used as a preposition)—as, *You had better* (*to*) *go; he would rather fight than* (*to*) *eat; there was nothing to do but* (*to*) *go.*

The similarity between these verbals and verbs is further illustrated by the following examples:

Looking wise is not a proof of wisdom. (gerund)
To look wise is not a proof of wisdom. (infinitive)
The owl, *looking wise,* sat on the limb of the tree. (participle)

In each of the preceding examples the verbals are used as copulative verbs—that is, they are followed by a predicate complement (*i.e., wise*). (See pp. 80-81.) This use resembles the copulative use of the verb *to look* in the sentence, "He looked wise."[9]

Thus we see that gerund, infinitive, and participle are alike in their *verbal* nature, in that: (1) They are derived from verbs. (2) They are followed by the same constructions as the verb from which they are derived (*i.e., English, wise*).

As to their use, the gerund and infinitive function as nouns; the participle functions as an adjective.[10]

The gerund, infinitive, and participle do not always retain the form in which we have just seen them. Being derived from verbs, they have, like verbs, voice and tense.[11]

Examples: *To have been mistaken* is not a sin. (infinitive, active voice, perfect tense)
To be seen in his company is dangerous. (infinitive, passive voice, present tense)
Being punished in public is humiliating. (gerund, passive voice, present tense)
They returned home, severely *bitten* by mosquitoes. (participle, passive voice, past tense)
Having been warned, I am now prepared. (participle, passive voice, perfect tense)

Warning: **Avoid the dangling participle.** This error is extremely troublesome: it is easy to commit, and it is often difficult to diagnose. Since the construction usually results from muddy or illogical thinking, the dangling participle is confusing and annoying to the reader.

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[9] For copulative verb, see pp. 80-81.

[10] It should be noted that frequently participles and gerunds lose their verbal nature and become, respectively, adjectives and nouns.

Examples: We picnicked by a *running* stream. (adjective)
Swimming is good exercise. (noun)

When in doubt, the student should consult a dictionary.

[11] For voice and tense, see pp. 95-101.

Three points must be borne in mind:

First, the participle must modify a noun or noun-equivalent—*i.e.*, a pronoun or a noun clause.

Second, the sentence must contain a noun which the participle may logically modify.

Third, the participle must grammatically modify the noun which it logically modifies.[12]

Let us consider some examples of dangling participles:

Wrong: (x) *Having arrived* late, the play was over.
Wrong: (y) *Reared* in poverty, his tendency was to value money too highly.
Wrong: (z) *Arriving* at the dock with our picnic lunch, the boat was seen.

In each one of these sentences the italicized participle, being an adjective, fails to attach itself to the noun which it should logically modify. In (x) *having arrived* modifies *play*. The play seems to have arrived. In (y) *reared* modifies *tendency*. The tendency seems to have been reared. In (z) *Arriving* modifies *boat*. The boat seems to have arrived.

In (x) *Having arrived* refers to some unexpressed person; there is no named person for the participle to modify. Therefore we must supply a subject for the verb *found: Having arrived late, WE found that the play was over.*

In (y) *Reared* refers to someone suggested by the possessive pronoun *his,* which is really used as an adjective to modify *tendency*. But a participle must modify a noun or noun-equivalent. Therefore, we must insert a noun or noun-equivalent which *reared* may logically modify. Thus, *Reared in poverty, HE* (or *JAMES*) *had a tendency to value money too highly.*

In (z) *Arriving* logically refers to people vaguely suggested by the possessive pronoun *our*. But *our,* like *his* in the preceding sentence, is used as an adjective and hence cannot be modified by a participle. Furthermore, since *our* belongs to the participial phrase *Arriving at the dock with our picnic lunch,* the participle cannot grammatically modify it. Logically, *Arriving* must modify the subject of the main clause, a subject which indicates the people who saw the boat. Such a subject must therefore be inserted. Thus, *Arriving at the dock with our picnic lunch, WE saw the boat.*

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[12] For an exception to these rules, see absolute phrases, pp. 113-114.

If we look over the examples above, we shall see that in each sentence the dangling participle construction preceded the main subject and verb. The participle, when it preceded the noun or noun-equivalent, attached itself logically to the subject of the main verb. In the incorrect sentence, *Having arrived late, the play was over,* we saw that *Having arrived* attached itself to *play;* but since it does not logically modify *play,* a confusion arose in our minds. It became necessary for us to substitute a logical subject which the participle might modify. Let us visualize the problem.

Participle *Subject*
Illogical: *Having arrived* late, the *play* was over.
Logical: *Having arrived* late, *we* found that the play was over.

Thus the first cure for a dangling participle is to insert, as a grammatical subject of the main verb, a noun or noun-equivalent which the participle may logically modify.

The alternative cure is to change the participle construction to a subordinate clause. (See p. 115.) The participle then becomes a modal verb, the subject of which is the noun or noun-equivalent that the participle should have logically modified. Below we have illustrated the initial faulty sentences and the two possible cures.

Wrong: Having arrived late, the play was over.
Cure No. 1: Having arrived late, *we* found that the play was over.
Cure No. 2: *Because* (or *Since*) *we arrived late,* we found that the play was over.
Wrong: Reared in poverty, his tendency was to value money too highly.
Cure No. 1: Reared in poverty, *he* had a tendency to value money too highly.
Cure No. 2: *Because* (or *Since*) *he had been reared in poverty,* he had a tendency to value money too highly.
Wrong: Arriving at the dock with our picnic lunch, the boat was seen.
Cure No. 1: Arriving at the dock with our picnic lunch, *we* saw the boat.
Cure No. 2: *When we arrived at the dock with our picnic lunch,* we saw the boat.

But not all dangling participles precede the main subject and verb. Several varieties of the error occur when the participial expression follows:

Simple participle following. Consider the following example:

Wrong: The ball was not round, *making* it roll unevenly.

The participle *making,* being an adjective, must modify a noun or noun-equivalent. The only noun in the sentence is *ball.* But *making* does not logically modify *ball.* It more nearly modifies *round,* but since *round* is an adjective and since a participle may not modify an adjective, the sentence breaks down grammatically.

Cure: The sentence must be recast.

Examples: Because the ball was not round, it rolled unevenly.
The fact that the ball was not round caused it to roll unevenly.

***Thus* and *thereby* followed by a participle.**

Many faulty sentences result when the writer expresses effect or result by tacking on to the end of the sentence a construction which consists of *thus* or *thereby* followed by a participle. Usually a dangling participle results.

Wrong: His salary was cut, *thus forcing* him to seek other work.

Forcing, a participle, must modify a noun or pronoun. *Salary,* the only noun outside the participial phrase, cannot be logically modified by *forcing;* the *salary* did not force him to seek other work. *Forcing* logically modifies the verb *was cut.* But a participle may not modify a verb.

Cure: Recast the sentence.

Examples: His cut in salary forced him to seek other work.
Since (*or* When) his salary was cut, he was forced to seek other work.
His salary was cut and he was forced to seek other work.

c. Special uses of the gerund. Gerunds, being verbal nouns, are used like nouns. In some of the more common uses listed below, note, however, that a gerund, like a verb, may take an object.

Subject of a verb: Loud *talking* annoyed him.
Object of a verb: He disliked loud *talking.*
Predicate complement: His hobby was *playing* golf.
Objective complement: Robinson calls this type of thinking *rationalizing.*
Object of a preposition: There is no advantage in *procrastinating.*
Appositive: His greatest fault, *shirking* his work, caused him to fail.

Nominative absolute: *Reading* having been denied him, he developed other resources.

d. Special uses of the infinitive. Many special uses of the infinitive present difficulties; some of them are disputed by grammarians. We shall be aided in our study if we constantly remember the substantive nature of the infinitive: it is used as a noun and takes many of the same constructions as nouns. If some of the following uses seem obscure, we may be helped by substituting a noun for the infinitive construction. Note, too, that, like a gerund, an infinitive may take an object.

Subject of a verb: *To work* is man's prerogative.
Object of a verb: He planned *to go.*
He intended *to read* late.
I told him *to go.* (In this sentence *him* may be considered the indirect object of *told.*)
Predicate complement: The work is *to begin* soon.
The man seems *to be* busy.

Note: If a noun or adjective were to be substituted for these infinitives, it would be a predicate complement.

Objective complement: The success made him (*to*) *work* harder.
The doctor wanted his patient *to rest.*
She expected him *to be* successful.

Note: In the first sentence under "Objective complement" we should have no difficulty in substituting a noun as objective complement—as, The success made him *a prig.*

The second and third sentences, however, present anomalous constructions. We cannot substitute nouns for *to rest* and *to be.* On the other hand, these infinitives do, in a general way, perform the functions of an objective complement—that is, they complete the verb and in a sense describe their respective objects (*i.e.,* a *resting* patient; a *being-successful* son).

Object of a preposition: He had no choice except *to come.*
I did nothing except (*to*) *work.*
The speaker was about *to commence.*
Appositive: He failed in his greatest attempt—*to fly* the Atlantic.
Nominative absolute: *To attack* proving unwise, he retreated.

Note: This construction is grammatically correct, but awkward. The example is presented only as further evidence of the similarity between infinitives and nouns.

Here we should note another common construction as exemplified in the following sentence:

He had money *to lend.*

We might explain this use of the infinitive by saying that *to lend* is an infinitive modifying *money*. But if the infinitive is truly a verbal *noun,* it cannot modify anything.[13]

We can explain this anomalous situation by briefly investigating the historical background of the infinitive. "In Old English the infinitive had a special case-ending, the dative, which showed unmistakably that it was the object of *to*. For example, *bindan* was the infinitive form that was used as subject or object of a verb; *bindanne* was the form used as object of a preposition; *to bindanne* meant 'to the binding' or 'for binding.' The ending was lost, but the prepositional phrase remains in such idioms as 'money to lend' and 'easy to see.' *Lend* and *see* are the objects of *to;* these phrases modify *money* and *easy*. . . .

"The test for recognizing a modifying infinitive is to see whether the gerund and another preposition (usually *for*) can be substituted. . . ."[14] Thus we could say, in the sentence above, "He had money *for lending*."

Although such a substitution of *for* (or some other preposition) does not always produce a normal English idiom, it does help to clarify this special use of the infinitive.

This explanation can be applied when the phrase modifies a noun, an adverb, an adjective, or a verb.

Examples: There is not time *to wait.* (for waiting)
  [*To wait* modifies the noun *time.*]
He had too much *to do.* (for doing)
  [*To do* modifies the adverb *too.*]
The automobile was hard *to start.* (for starting)
  [*To start* modifies the adjective *hard.*]
I shudder *to think* of it. (at thinking of it)
  [*To think* modifies the verb *shudder.*]

Exercise 17. Infinitives, Gerunds, and Participles

Point out the infinitives, gerunds, and participles in the following sentences, and tell how each is used:

1. I saw him entering the house.
2. It is not wise to enter a house without knocking.
3. Working ten hours a day is not good for any man.

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[13] Many authorities, nevertheless, prefer to treat *to lend* as an infinitive used as an adjective, modifying *money*.

[14] C. H. Ward, *Grammar for Composition*. Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1933, p. 290.

4. After working ten hours one is apt to be tired.
5. I have no complaint to make regarding his work.
6. I saw him regarding her with a queer expression on his face.
7. I asked him to wait until I had finished reading the chapter.
8. He was on the point of leaving when I asked him to wait.
9. My friend has a family to support.
10. We want our friends to live up to our expectations.
11. The work finished, the men went home.
12. Having finished their work, the men went home.
13. After finishing a theme the student must check it for mistakes.
14. He considered the work finished.
15. He hoped to finish the work before he left.
16. The work seemed to progress rapidly.
17. He had work to do before he left.
18. Gliding through the grass, the snake struck without warning.
19. Having sensed the danger, he locked the door.
20. We managed to reach the summit without tiring ourselves.
21. The brakes screeching, the car came to a sudden stop.
22. The car came to a sudden stop with screeching brakes.
23. The sudden stop made the brakes screech.
24. Brakes are difficult to adjust.
25. The greatest fault with the car, "shimmying," cannot be easily overcome.
26. I have no doubts concerning his honesty.
27. He worked hard, concerning himself chiefly with perfecting his technique.
28. There is no reason for concerning yourself with trifles.
29. The rope, made fast to the dock, kept the boat from drifting.
30. The rope being made fast to the dock, they went on shore.

Exercise 18. Dangling Participles

Correct the dangling participles in the following sentences:

1. Having a father who is a writer, a liking for English has come naturally to me.
2. Working in a stock exchange, there was little need for English composition.
3. Having been an executive, he scorned smaller jobs, thereby causing his later poverty.
4. Stated thus, one can see the problem better.
5. Having discussed these points, there are a few other factors to be considered.
6. Diagramed thus, one can see the idea of the sentence at a glance.
7. After speaking with the dean, he advised me to take the course.
8. Having done what he asked, nothing further was expected of me.
9. Only death remained for him, having lost his last friend.
10. Passing the house, the old man could be seen sitting on the porch.

11. Having worked hard, it was only natural that he should be taken sick.
12. Having told me his story, I was sorry when the man left me.
13. Sitting on top of the mountain, a glorious view could be seen.
14. The book proved interesting, not having read any of this author's work before.
15. Playing the most brilliant football of his career, the game was finally decided by John's long run.

E. PHRASES AND CLAUSES

1. Distinction between a phrase and a clause.

a. A phrase is a group of words forming a thought-unit which does NOT contain both a subject and a predicate.

Examples: I am afraid *in the dark.*
After coming of age he voted.

b. A clause is a group of words forming a thought-unit which contains BOTH a subject and a predicate.

Examples: When I am in the dark, I am afraid.
After he had come of age, he voted.

2. Phrases.

a. Phrases are of four types:

(1) Prepositional phrases (*i.e.,* introduced by a preposition)

Examples: I found the book *behind the sofa.*
Your letter is *on the table.*

(2) Participial phrases (*i.e.,* introduced by a participle)

Examples: Hearing a noise, he investigated.
Having heard a noise, he investigated.

(3) Gerund phrases (*i.e.,* introduced by a gerund)

Examples: Reading a book is a pleasure.
I dislike *playing bridge.*

(4) Infinitive phrases (*i.e.,* centering about an infinitive)

Examples: To read a book is a pleasure.
I do not like *to play cards every night.*

b. Phrases have six functions. They are used:

(1) As nouns

Examples: *Behind the door* is the place for your rubbers.
(prepositional phrase used as subject)
My delight is *reading novels.*
(gerund phrase used as predicate complement)
He wanted *to read constantly.*
(infinitive phrase used as object)

(2) As adjectives

Examples: The man *in the moon* came down too soon.
(prepositional phrase modifying *man*)
The boy *reading the book* is my son.
(participial phrase modifying *boy*)
I have a task *to perform.*
(infinitive phrase modifying *task*) [15]

(3) As adverbs

Examples: I came *in the dark.*
(prepositional phrase modifying *came*—a verb)
Be sure *to come.*[15]
(infinitive phrase modifying *sure*—an adjective)

(4) As absolute phrases. An absolute phrase is a phrase which is used alone and has no grammatical function in the sentence. Since it usually refers to the sentence as a whole rather than to any particular word or element in the sentence, it is sometimes called a *sentence modifier.*

(a) Parenthetical phrases, which, like side remarks or comments, qualify the sentence as a whole.[16]

Examples: *As for me,* I disapprove.
By and large, I agree with him.

(b) Absolute participles, gerunds, and infinitives, which, because they refer to no definite element in the sentence, are exceptions to the rule banning dangling modifiers. (See pp. 74, 199.)

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[15] See pp. 109-110.

[16] Sentence modifiers are exceptions to the rule which bans dangling modifiers. (See pp. 74, 199.)

Examples: Generally speaking, the book is interesting. (participial phrase)
In shooting, the rifle is lowered after each shot. (gerund phrase)
To tell the truth, I am bewildered. (infinitive phrase)

(c) The nominative absolute, consisting of a noun (or pronoun) used in conjunction with a participle to form an absolute phrase, grammatically independent of the rest of the sentence. (See p. 104.)

Examples: The sun having set, we went home.
His courage failing, he ran away.

3. Clauses.

Clauses are of two types—principal clauses and subordinate clauses.

a. A principal clause makes a complete statement which can stand by itself. Two or more principal clauses may appear in the same sentence.

Examples: I am tired. (one principal clause)
I am tired, and *you look tired, too.* (two principal clauses)

Warning: **Avoid the "comma fault" or "comma splice."**

If a sentence contains two or more principal clauses, they must be separated in either of two ways:

(1) By a comma, provided the comma is followed by one of the coördinating conjunctions, *and, but, for, or, nor, neither.*

(2) By a semicolon.

Examples: I am tired, *and* you look tired, too.
I am tired; you look tired, too.

A failure to observe this rule results in "the comma fault," or "the comma splice." The error results from substitution of a comma for either (1) a semicolon, or (2) one of the coördinating conjunctions *and, but, for, or, nor, neither.* (See also pp. 143-144.)

***Warning:* Avoid the "sentence (or period) fault."**

A phrase or subordinate clause should not stand by itself as a complete sentence. A failure to observe this rule results in what is called the "sentence fault" or the "period fault." Although experienced writers sometimes effectively use fragments of sentences in place of sentences, the student is advised to avoid the practice until he has thoroughly mastered the idea of the English sentence.

Ineffective: I heard it at Mrs. Smith's. Where I had dinner.
Effective: But you—I mean "we"—will sit down to a great book as though we were sitting down to a ham sandwich. No sense of personal inferiority in us! No mood to resolve! No "tuning up" of the intellectual apparatus! But just a casual, easy air, as if saying to the book: "Well, come along, let's have a look at you!"—ARNOLD BENNETT

b. A subordinate clause is used as a part of speech—either as an adjective (adjectival clause), as an adverb (adverbial clause), or as a noun (noun, or substantive, clause).

(1) Adjectival clauses modify nouns or noun-equivalents. These clauses are introduced by:

(a) Relative pronouns—as, *who, which, whom, that.*

Examples: He is the man *whom I saw yesterday.*
(adjectival clause modifying *man*)
The boy *who is sitting there* is my son.
(adjectival clause modifying *boy*)

(b) Relative adverbs—as, *whence* (from which), *when* (in which), *where* (in which), *while* (during which), *whereby* (by which), *wherein* (in which), *why* (on account of which).

Examples: This is the place *whence we departed.*
(adjectival clause modifying *place*)
There was no time *when he was not in pain.*
(adjectival clause modifying *time*)
I know the house *where he lives.*
(adjectival clause modifying *house*)
Tell me the reason *why you will not go.*
(adjectival clause modifying *reason*)

Adjectival clauses are of two types—restrictive and nonrestrictive.

A *restrictive clause* definitely restricts the meaning of the modified noun (or noun-equivalent). That is, if the modified noun or noun-equivalent names a class or type, the restrictive clause limits or restricts that class or type to a particular class or type, or to an individual. (See pp. 145-146.)

Example: Shoes *that are worn out* are useless.
(The clause *that are worn out* restricts the general class of shoes to only those particular shoes which are worn out.)

The best test whereby to determine whether a clause is restrictive or non-restrictive is to omit the clause. If the meaning of the sentence is altered or destroyed, the clause is restrictive.

Thus, if we should omit the clause in the foregoing sentence, the sentence would read, *Shoes are useless.* The sentence would be absurd.

A *non-restrictive clause* gives additional information which is not essential to the thought of the sentence.

Examples: His shoes, *which he had bought only yesterday,* were covered with mud.
He put on his shoes, *which he then proceeded to lace.*

It will be noted that in both of the foregoing sentences the clauses may be omitted without altering the main intention of the sentence.

***Warning:* Note the punctuation of relative clauses.**

The distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive clauses is indicated by means of punctuation. *Non-restrictive clauses are set off by commas; restrictive clauses are not.* (See pp. 145-146.)

Examples: Shoes *that are worn out* are useless.
His new shoes, *which he bought only yesterday,* were covered with mud.

The reason for the rule is plain: because restrictive clauses are essential to the thought of the sentence, they must not be separated from their antecedents by punctuation. But non-restrictive clauses, which are not essential to the thought of the sentence, should be set off by commas.

(2) Adverbial clauses, like adverbs, may modify a verb, an adjective, or another adverb, or their equivalents.

Examples: *Because I was late,* I missed my dinner.
(The clause modifies the verb *missed.*)
She is so beautiful *that people stare at her.*
(The clause modifies the adverb *so.*)
Working *when one is tired* is useless.
(The clause modifies the gerund *working.*)
Having sat *where the ground was damp,* he caught cold.
(The clause modifies the participle *having sat.*)
To wander *where one pleases* is a treat.
(The clause modifies the infinitive *to wander.*)

Adverbial clauses are introduced by subordinating conjunctions. These subordinating conjunctions are so numerous that it is possible to employ them to express almost every shade of meaning or idea. If we master the use of these conjunctions so that we can with exactness convey the relationships among our ideas, we shall be well on the way to becoming clear, effective writers.

For the purpose of convenience, the chief subordinating conjunctions have been classified and listed below:

Cause: as, because, inasmuch as, since
Comparison: as, as if, as though, than
Concession: although, even if, even though, while
Condition: if, in case that, on condition that, provided, provided that, unless
Contrast: whereas, while
Degree: as, as much as, than
Manner: as, as if, as though, how, just as
Place: whence, where, wherever, whither
Purpose: in order that, lest, so that, that
Result: so that, that
Time: after, as, as soon as, before, since, till, until, when, while

(3) Noun (substantive) clauses, as their name implies, are used as nouns—that is, they may be used in any construction in which a noun is used. Some of the more common constructions are illustrated here:

(a) *Subject: That he is brilliant* is unquestioned.
(b) *Direct object:* I doubt *whether I can come.*
(c) *Predicate complement:* He is not *what he appears.*
(d) *Indirect object:* Give it to *whoever calls for it.*
(e) *Objective complement:* You made me *what I am today.*
(f) *Object of preposition:* Listen to *whatever he says.*

(g) *Object of participle:* Hearing *what he had to say,* I was impressed.
(h) *Object of gerund:* Knowing *what one means* is an aid to clear writing.
(i) *Object of infinitive:* I want to do *what is expected of me.*

***Warning:* Distinguish noun clauses, adverbial clauses, and principal clauses.**

(1) A common mistake is the failure to distinguish between a noun clause and an adverbial clause. The following constructions should be noted:

(a) *Is when, is where, is because.* The verb *to be* must be followed by a noun or noun-equivalent (*e.g.,* a noun clause), not by an adverbial clause. Since *when, where,* and *because* introduce subordinate clauses in the following sentences marked "Wrong," these clauses may not be used as noun clauses.[17]

Examples: *Wrong:* Cheating *is when* one copies another's work.
Right: Cheating is *copying* another's work. (*Copying* is a gerund—*i.e.,* a verbal noun.)
Right: Cheating occurs *when one copies another's work.* (The clause is adverbial, modifying *occurs.*)
Wrong: Sarcasm *is where* one says one thing but means another.
Right: Sarcasm is *saying* one thing but *meaning* another. (*Saying* and *meaning* are both gerunds—*i.e.,* verbal nouns.)
Wrong: The reason *is because* I am tired.
Right: The reason is *that I am tired.* (*That I am tired* is a noun clause, used as a predicate complement.)

(b) The *where* construction illustrated in the following example marked "Wrong" should be avoided.

Examples: *Wrong:* I see *where Jones is in town.* (The subordinate clause *where Jones is in town* illogically modifies *see.* The fact that Jones is in town is not *where* I see.)
Right: I see *that Jones is in town.* (*That Jones is in town* is a noun clause, object of *see.*)

(c) When a noun clause is used as subject of a verb, an *it* expletive construction is usually repetitious.

Examples: *Wrong:* Whether or not I like my job *it* makes no difference.
Right: Whether or not I like my job makes no difference.

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[17] By some authorities *is because* is accepted as good *colloquial* English. See Sterling A. Leonard, *Current English Usage.* Chicago: The Inland Press, 1935, p. 145.

(2) A principal clause, unless it is a quoted sentence, should not be used in place of a noun clause.

Examples: Principal clause wrongly used as subject: I am not well is the reason he asked me.

Noun clause rightly used as subject: The fact that I am not well (or, *That I am not well*) is my reason for refusing the invitation.

Principal clause wrongly used as predicate complement: The reason for my coming is *he asked me.*

Noun clause correctly used as predicate complement: The reason for my coming is *that he asked me.*

Quoted sentence correctly used as subject: "Don't give up the ship" were the words of Captain Lawrence.

Quoted sentence correctly used as object: Captain Lawrence said, *"Don't give up the ship."*

Exercise 19. Distinguishing Phrases and Clauses

(1) Copy each phrase and clause in the following sentences.
(2) Tell how each is used.

1. If a little knowledge is dangerous, where is a man who has so much as to be out of danger?—THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY
2. In nineteen cases out of twenty, for a woman to play her heart in the game of love is to play cards with a sharper.—PAUL BOURGET
3. Perhaps no man shall ever know whether it is better to wear nightcaps or not.—SAMUEL JOHNSON
4. A fool always finds a greater fool to admire him.—NICOLAS BOILEAU
5. I purpose to fight it out on this line, if it takes all summer.—ULYSSES S. GRANT
6. Most persons who have reached middle age know absolutely nothing worth while except what they saw during the one brief, sweet, youthful hour when they were in love.—WILLIAM WINTER
7. I have never understood how Esau could sell his birthright for a mess of potage; but there are moments when the least sensual of men would not think it ridiculous to pay dearly for a good slice of roast beef.—XAVIER MARMIER
8. The unknown, that is what frightens weak minds.—LOUIS BLANC
9. The Circumlocution Office was beforehand with all the public departments in the art of perceiving HOW NOT TO DO IT.—CHARLES DICKENS
10. The chain of wedlock is so heavy that it takes two to carry it—sometimes three.—ALEXANDRE DUMAS
11. It is often woman who inspires us with the great things that she will prevent us from accomplishing.—ALEXANDRE DUMAS
12. There are three things difficult: to keep a secret, to suffer an injury, to use leisure.—FRANÇOIS M. A. VOLTAIRE

13. Loving hearts are like poor folks; they are contented with whatever is given them.—Mme. Swetchine
14. Insults are humiliating to those who utter them, when they are not successful in humiliating those who receive them.—Jean François Marmontel
15. My children, in marriage there is nothing good but the day before. —Octave Feuillet
16. To be without enemies is to be unworthy of having friends.—Joseph Joubert
17. I see that I am to wait for what will be exhibited by death.—Walt Whitman
18. There is something of one's soul in one's voice.—Henri Lavedan

Exercise 20. Functions of Phrases and Clauses

Point out (1) the types and (2) the functions of the phrases and clauses in Exercise 19.

Exercise 21. Noun Clauses

Correct the following sentences, giving reasons for your changes:

1. All through the lower grades was taken up with the study of rudimentary English.
2. The reason for my good grades is because I have always taken an interest in the subject.
3. Where the teacher trips me up is when I have to write an impromptu theme.
4. My reason for taking this course is because I am intending to continue the study of engineering.
5. It was about the seventh grade where I first was taught the importance of sentence structure.
6. Is it any wonder that we make the statement the movies wield a tremendous influence over the people of the world?
7. It is then how appreciative I am that I am able to go away to school.
8. The first we knew of the matter was when we read it in this magazine.
9. The reason he made the mistake was he was nervous.
10. I read in the paper where he is going abroad.
11. We find in one instance where one of the characters fights against forces beyond his control.
12. It is doubtful he would have had the courage to do it.
13. One of these reasons is why I particularly like this poem.
14. In the last stanza is where we are shown what a failure he was.
15. Whatever he tells you, it is sure to be wrong.

CHAPTER IV

SENTENCE ANALYSIS

A. TYPES OF SENTENCES

WE have now completed our study of formal grammar. We have learned the names and functions of the words and groups of words which we employ to express our ideas. By now we should have learned to write *correctly*.

Two problems remain for us: first, to learn how to write *clearly;* and second, to learn how to write *effectively*. Clearness is our first goal, for without clearness we may never hope to write with any degree of effectiveness. Clearness is the quality which makes our writing quickly and easily understood by the reader; effectiveness, the quality which makes it memorable and impressive.

In undertaking the problem of stating our ideas clearly, we can be helped by visualizing the sentence as an entity. If we can be made to see graphically the relationships among the parts of a sentence, we shall be in a better position to see how those parts can be made to function easily and efficiently.

At the outset, it will be helpful to make several distinctions:

The *simple subject* of a verb is the subject alone, without its modifiers.

The *complete subject* of a verb is the subject with all its modifiers.

The *simple predicate* is the verb itself, without its modifiers.

The *complete predicate* is the verb with all its modifiers, including its objects, predicate complements, etc., and their modifiers.

It will also be helpful to distinguish four types of sentences:

1. **A simple sentence** has only one principal clause and no subordinate clauses, though it may have modifiers in the form of words and phrases—as, *The man has a hat on his head.*

2. **A complex sentence** has only one principal clause, but has

one or more subordinate clauses—as, *The pipe which you are smoking smells to heaven.*

3. **A compound sentence** has two or more principal clauses, but no subordinate clauses—as, *He came in the morning, but she could not wait to see him.*

4. **A compound-complex sentence,** as the name implies, is a combination of a compound and a complex sentence. It has two or more principal clauses and one or more subordinate clauses—as, *If you will telephone me from the station, I will meet you and we can drive out together.*

Bearing these distinctions in mind, we are now ready to begin our study of diagraming.

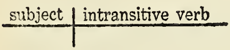
Diagraming is an old device of grammarians for presenting graphically the sentence in its various logical relationships. The diagram of a sentence enables the eye to see the sentence almost as one would visualize a concrete object. When a sentence is diagramed, its structure becomes plainly comprehensible, no matter how involved it may be. There are various mechanical devices for diagraming, all of them correct in so far as they present the sentence clearly to the eye.

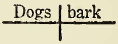
B. DIAGRAMING

1. THE SUBJECT, VERB, OBJECT, PREDICATE COMPLEMENT, AND OBJECTIVE COMPLEMENT occupy a horizontal line, which we may call the "backbone line" of the sentence.

a. The simple subject and verb are separated by a short vertical line, which bisects the backbone line.

Dogs bark. (simple sentence)





b. The direct object[1] is separated from the verb by a short vertical line which does *not* bisect the backbone line. (A similar line also separates infinitives, gerunds, and participles from their objects. See 2, pp. 123-124.)

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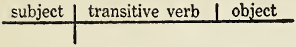
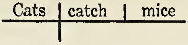
[1] For diagraming the indirect object, see 2 (b), pp. 123-124.

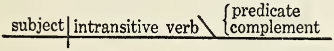
Cats catch mice. (simple sentence)

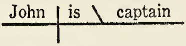

subject
transitive verb
object


Cats
catch
mice

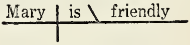
c. Predicate complements (see pp. 80-81) are separated from the verb by a short diagonal line, slanting downward to the *right,* which does not bisect the backbone line.

John is captain. (simple sentence)


subject
intransitive verb
predicate complement

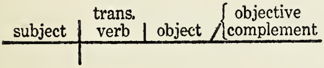

John
is
captain

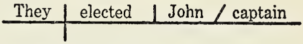
Mary is friendly. (simple sentence)


Mary
is
friendly

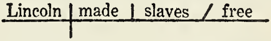
d. Objective complements (see p. 86) are separated from the verb by a short diagonal line, slanting downward to the *left,* which does not bisect the backbone line.

They elected John captain. (simple sentence)


subject
trans. verb
object
objective complement


They
elected
John
captain

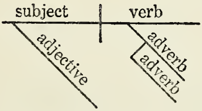
Lincoln made slaves free. (simple sentence)

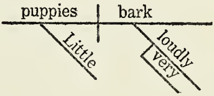

Lincoln
made
slaves
free

2. **MODIFIERS are placed on diagonal lines beneath the words which they modify.**

a. Simple modifiers appear on diagonal lines.

Little puppies bark very loudly. (simple sentence)


subject
verb
adjective
adverb
adverb


puppies
bark
Little
loudly
very

b. Modifying phrases—i.e., prepositional phrases (*including indirect objects*[2] [see p. 85], *modifying infinitive phrases* [see

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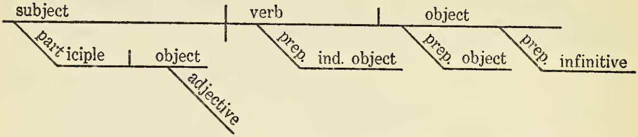
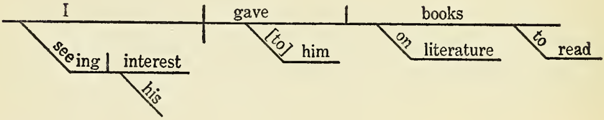
[2] If the preposition with the indirect object is not expressed, it is placed in brackets on the diagonal line. (See 5, pp. 133-134.)

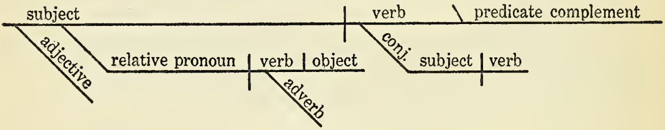
p. 112], *gerund phrases* [see p. 112], *and participial phrases* [see p. 112])—are placed beneath the words which they modify. Prepositions and participles are placed on diagonal lines connecting with horizontal lines on which the objects (if any) appear.


subject
verb
object
participle
object
adjective
prep.
ind. object
prep.
object
prep.
infinitive

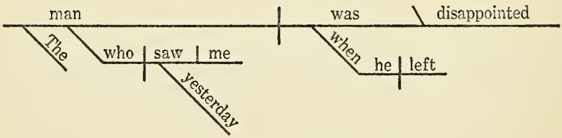
Seeing his interest, I gave him books on literature to read. (simple sentence)


I
gave
books
seeing
interest
his
[to]
him
on
literature
to
read

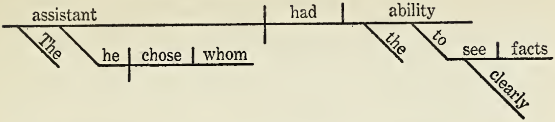
c. Modifying clauses, both adjectival and adverbial (see pp. 115-117) are placed on horizontal lines, which are joined to the modified word by a diagonal line.


subject
verb
predicate complement
adjective
relative pronoun
verb
object
adverb
conj.
subject
verb

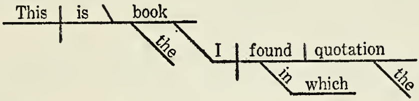
The man who saw me yesterday was disappointed when he left. (complex sentence)


man
was
disappointed
The
who
saw
me
yesterday
when
he
left

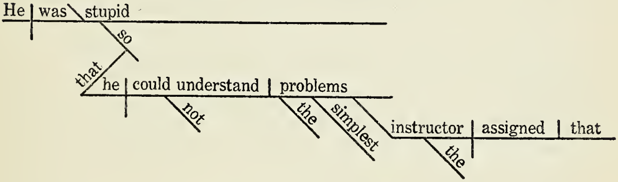
The assistant whom he chose had the ability to see facts clearly. (complex sentence)


assistant
had
ability
The
he
chose
whom
the
to
see
facts
clearly

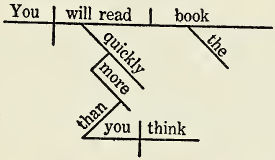
This is the book in which I found the quotation. (complex sentence)


This
is
book
the
I
found
quotation
in
which
the

He was so stupid that [conjunction] he could not understand the simplest problems that [relative pronoun] the instructor assigned. (complex sentence)


He
was
stupid
so
that
he
could understand
problems
not
the
simplest
instructor
assigned
that
the

You will read the book more quickly than you think. (complex sentence)


You
will read
book
quickly
the
more
than
you
think

Exercise 22. Diagraming: Simple and Complex Sentences

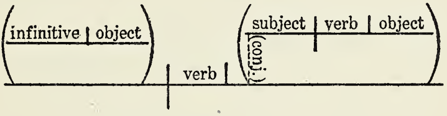
Diagram the following sentences, first stating whether they are simple or complex:

1. Exactly the same difficulties attach to flying.—J. B. S. HALDANE
2. It had a lonely face, suggesting tragical possibilities.—THOMAS HARDY

3. The parents with whom I talked could not have said that.—MAX McCONN
4. The ideal Gentleman's College should be situated in a rural community at some distance from the larger cities.—MAX McCONN
5. In the past this type of thinking has been called Reason.—JAMES HARVEY ROBINSON
6. Owing to the excess of women, a larger number of women remain unmarried.—BERTRAND RUSSELL
7. These indications may sometimes seem irreconcilable.—REXFORD G. TUGWELL
8. By seeing it thus in parts one could form an idea of the arch as a whole.—CHARLES D. STEWART
9. The horse came to America in 1519 along with the Spanish conquerors.—CHARLES D. STEWART
10. The disease of an evil conscience is beyond the practice of all the physicians of all the countries of the world.—WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE
11. Isolation on a heath renders vulgarity well-nigh impossible.—THOMAS HARDY
12. Like most people who are in the habit of writing things to be printed, I have not the knack of writing really good letters.—MAX BEERBOHM
13. A middle-aged farmer sat at a window before me, watching the business in the street below the verandah.—H. M. TOMLINSON
14. As the years passed, a restlessness began to grow upon her.—LYTTON STRACHEY
15. I had gone out hurriedly in my shirt sleeves in spite of the weather, which had suddenly turned cold.—CHARLES D. STEWART
16. Those who say this betray their failure to penetrate the surface of our life.—REXFORD G. TUGWELL
17. Fragments of the talk of youth, mixed with laughter, came my way. —H. M. TOMLINSON
18. There the form stood, motionless as the hill beneath.—THOMAS HARDY
19. Then, while her mother and sister were taking the waters at Carlsbad, she succeeded in slipping off to a nursing institution at Kaiserwerth, where she remained for more than three months.—LYTTON STRACHEY
20. Here was something to think about.—CHARLES D. STEWART
21. But though there is no good marriage without love, the best marriages have a purpose which goes beyond love.—BERTRAND RUSSELL
22. They belong to the past, out of which they will never venture.—H. M. TOMLINSON
23. They had proved utterly unequal to their task.—LYTTON STRACHEY
24. If you look through the colonial writers for emotional discoveries outside the field of religion, you find the occasion of their emotions almost pathetically utilitarian.—STUART PRATT SHERMAN
25. Its slopes now are dotted with pale hummocks which are sheep.—H. M. TOMLINSON
26. Right here one could make use of such an analysis as Thoreau made. —CHARLES D. STEWART

27. I dare not call them evidence of a peace-loving people.—H. M. Tomlinson
28. At Niagara the mist is fairly pregnant with rainbows.—Charles D. Stewart
29. Their violence, which can go beyond the line where a Choctaw would have paused, has infected even the arts.—H. M. Tomlinson
30. It was made by statesmen whose views differed in no essential from those now preparing for another war.—H. M. Tomlinson

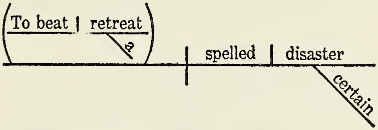
3. PHRASES AND CLAUSES EMPLOYED AS NOUNS (SUBSTANTIVES), when used as the subject, object, predicate complement, or objective complement, are placed on a separate line above the backbone line and are enclosed in parentheses. A conjunction introducing a noun clause is placed on a vertical dotted line drawn between the noun-clause line and the backbone line. When used as the object of a preposition or of a participle, these phrases and clauses are placed in the regular position for such objects and are enclosed in parentheses.



a. Infinitive phrases used as nouns (see p. 109).

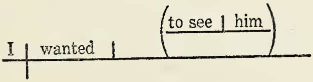
(1) *Infinitive used as subject:*

To beat a retreat spelled certain disaster. (simple sentence)



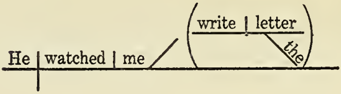
(2) *Infinitive used as direct object:*

I wanted to see him. (simple sentence)



(3) *Infinitive used as objective complement:*

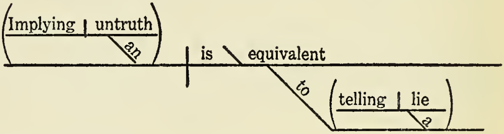
He watched me write the letter. (simple sentence)


He
watched
me
write
letter
the

b. Gerund phrases used as nouns (see pp. 108-109).

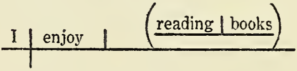
(1) *Gerund used as subject and as object of a preposition:*

Implying an untruth is equivalent to telling a lie. (simple sentence)


Implying
untruth
an
is
equivalent
to
telling
lie
a

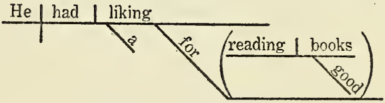
(2) *Gerund used as direct object:*

I enjoy reading books. (simple sentence)

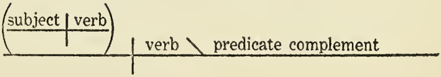

I
enjoy
reading
books

(3) *Gerund used as object of a preposition:*

He had a liking for reading good books. (simple sentence)

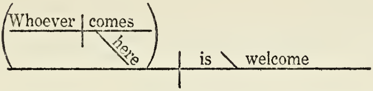

He
had
liking
a
for
reading
books
good

c. Clauses used as nouns (see pp. 117-118).


subject
verb
verb
predicate complement

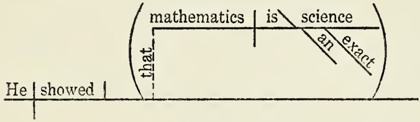
(1) *Noun clause used as subject of the verb:*

Whoever comes here is welcome. (complex sentence)

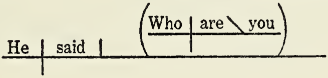

Whoever
comes
here
is
welcome

(2) *Noun clause used as object of the verb:*

He showed that mathematics is an exact science. (complex sentence)

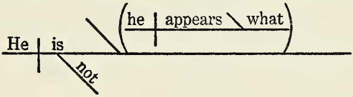

mathematics
is
science
an
exact
that
He
showed

"Who are you?" he said. (complex sentence)


Who
are
you
He
said

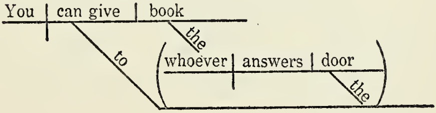
(3) *Noun clause used as predicate complement:*

He is not what he appears. (complex sentence)


he
appears
what
He
is
not

(4) *Noun clause used as the object of a preposition:*

You can give the book to whoever answers the door. (complex sentence)


You
can give
book
the
to
whoever
answers
door
the

Exercise 23. Diagraming: Simple and Complex Sentences

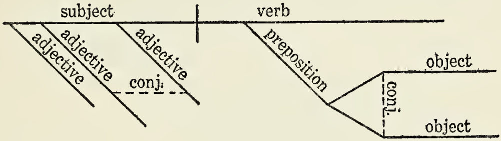
Diagram the following sentences, first stating whether they are simple or complex:

1. The law of nature is that life is the purpose of life.—REXFORD G. TUGWELL
2. That was what I now wanted to know.—CHARLES D. STEWART
3. Hardy makes us feel that we are backing human nature in an unequal contest.—VIRGINIA WOOLF
4. The purpose of education should be to train us to live.—HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD
5. To define this deeper thrusting purpose is to approach the realm of morals. . . .—REXFORD G. TUGWELL
6. We hesitate to admit openly our past mistakes.—REXFORD G. TUGWELL
7. Eventually, she asked him to do her a single favour.—LYTTON STRACHEY
8. If you do that, you are likely to find that you are carrying a lighted torch.—STUART PRATT SHERMAN
9. About an hour before sunset I resolved to go no further that day. —W. H. HUDSON
10. To see her hair was to fancy that a whole winter did not contain darkness enough to form its shadow.—THOMAS HARDY
11. The New Deal aspires to obviate these alternatives.—REXFORD G. TUGWELL
12. What changes this new concept may induce in the average curriculum time alone can tell.—HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD
13. The deification of science prevented its worshippers from perceiving how perilously lopsided it had become.—ESMÉ WINGFIELD-STRATFORD
14. The result is that if she marries she marries late.—BERTRAND RUSSELL
15. One of her very first steps was to take advantage of the invitation which Queen Victoria had sent her to the Crimea, together with the commemorative brooch.—LYTTON STRACHEY
16. When the boy had reascended to the top of the valley he found the fire to be still burning on the bank.—THOMAS HARDY
17. The father begs the employment agency to find his son a job elsewhere—where the same attitude is present!—GEORGE R. LEIGHTON and RICHARD HELLMANN
18. But at last his spirit began to sink as well as his mind and body. —LYTTON STRACHEY
19. We may suppose that peace has its virtues.—H. M. TOMLINSON
20. The purpose of society in supporting medical schools is only incidentally to train a few favored individuals for a highly lucrative profession.—MAX McCONN
21. The great question is, what are we going to do about it?—HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD

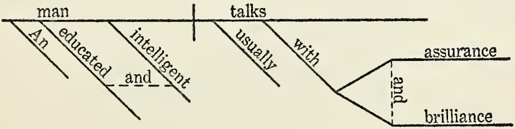
22. The dissatisfaction is often colored by ignorance of how the world's work is done.—George R. Leighton and Richard Hellmann
23. Perhaps Mr. Mill might have asked why the argument had not been pushed to its logical conclusion.—Lytton Strachey
24. It is impossible to forecast what action this generation may take in the future.—George R. Leighton and Richard Hellmann
25. What really interests me is the deduction from history of the principles which govern this discovery from age to age.—Stuart Pratt Sherman
26. Idle is exactly what the rich ought to be.—Henry Pratt Fairchild
27. Germany affords one illustration of what may happen to an unwanted generation in a highly industrialized country.—George R. Leighton and Richard Hellmann
28. In his fear of being seen the boy rendered detection certain by nervous motion.—Thomas Hardy
29. We keep on working because we don't know how to stop.—Henry Pratt Fairchild
30. He learned by experience that the surest way to enlarge his equipment for happiness was to improve his productive technic.—Henry Pratt Fairchild

4. COMPOUND ELEMENTS are placed on parallel lines; the conjunction which joins them (if expressed) is placed on a dotted line between the parallel lines.

a. Compound simple modifiers:

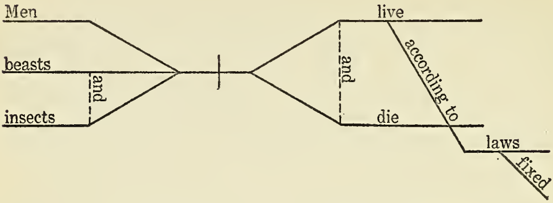

subject
verb
adjective
adjective
adjective
conj.
preposition
object
conj.
object

An educated and intelligent man usually talks with assurance and brilliance. (simple sentence)


man
talks
An
educated
and
intelligent
usually
with
assurance
and
brilliance

b. Compound subjects and verbs:

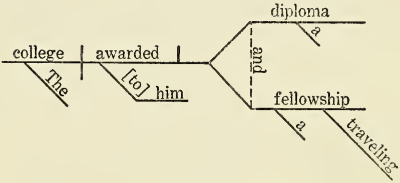
Men, beasts, and insects live and die according to fixed laws. (simple sentence)


Men
beasts
insects
and
and
live
die
according to
laws
fixed

Note: The prepositional phrase *according to fixed laws* modifies both *live* and *die,* and is diagramed accordingly.

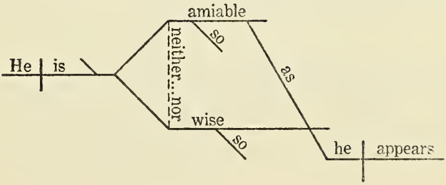
c. Compound object:

The college awarded him a diploma and a traveling fellowship. (simple sentence)


college
The
awarded
[to] him
and
diploma
a
fellowship
a
traveling

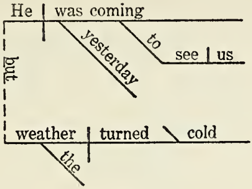
d. Correlatives (see p. 77):

He is neither so amiable nor so wise as he appears. (complex sentence)


He
is
neither...nor
amiable
so
wise
so
as
he
appears

e. Compound sentence:

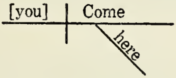
He was coming to see us yesterday, but the weather turned cold. (compound sentence)


He
was coming
yesterday
to
see
us
but
weather
turned
cold
the

5. ELLIPTICAL AND IMPLIED ELEMENTS are placed in the position which they would occupy if they were expressed, and are enclosed in brackets.

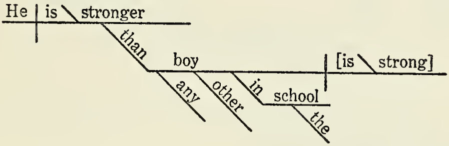
a. Implied subject of an imperative (see p. 103, n. 7):

Come here. (simple sentence)

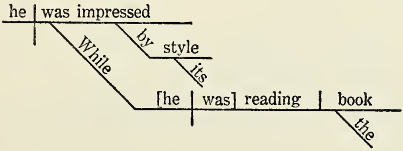

[you]
Come
here

b. Elliptical clause (see pp. 198-199):

He is stronger than any other boy in the school. (complex sentence)

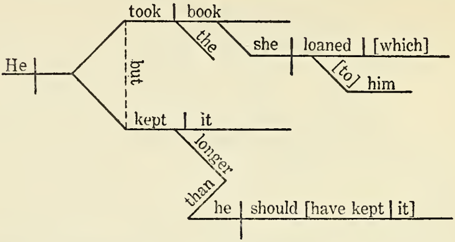

He
is
stronger
than
boy
any
other
in
school
the
[is
strong]

While reading the book he was impressed by its style. (complex sentence)


he
was impressed
While
by
style
its
[he
was] reading
book
the

c. Implied element:

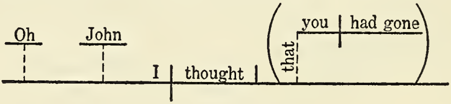
He took the book she loaned him but kept it longer than he should. (complex sentence)


He
took
book
the
she
loaned
[which]
[to]
him
but
kept
it
longer
than
he
should [have kept
it]

6. INDEPENDENT ELEMENTS—*i.e.,* **interjections, words of direct address, and parenthetical expressions—SENTENCE MODIFIERS, EXPLETIVES, AND APPOSITIVES are placed on a separate line above the backbone line, to which they are joined by a vertical dotted line.**

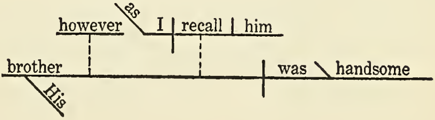
a. Interjection (see p. 77) *and direct address* (see p. 82):

Oh, John, I thought that you had gone. (complex sentence)


Oh
John
I
thought
that
you
had gone

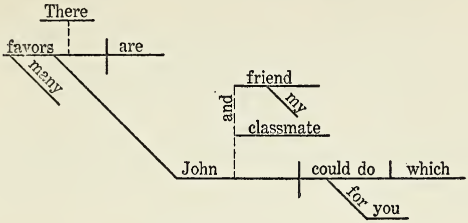
b. Parenthetical expression (see pp. 74, 113) *and sentence modifier* (see pp. 74, 113-114, 199):

His brother, however, as I recall him, was handsome. (complex sentence)


however
as
I
recall
him
brother
His
was
handsome

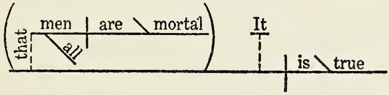
*c. Expletive **there*** (see p. 65, n. 3) *and appositive* (see p. 81):

There are many favors which John, my friend and classmate, could do for you. (complex sentence)


There
favors
are
many
friend
my
and
classmate
John
could do
which
for
you

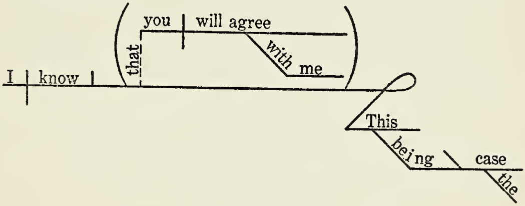
*d. Expletive **it*** (see p. 65):

It is true that all men are mortal. (complex sentence)


that
men
are
mortal
all
It
is
true

7. **THE NOMINATIVE ABSOLUTE** (see p. 104) **is placed on a separate backbone line below the main backbone line, to which it is joined, as illustrated below.**

This being the case, I know that you will agree with me. (complex sentence)


I
know
that
you
will agree
with
me
This
being
case
the

Exercise 24. Diagraming: Simple, Complex, Compound, and Complex-Compound Sentences

Diagram the following sentences, first stating whether they are simple, complex, compound, or complex-compound:

1. A dream implies the unreal and the unrealizable.—Rexford G. Tugwell
2. I walked around it slowly and the curve suddenly went up in the opposite direction.—Charles D. Stewart
3. Behind me was a larger table, and about it a party of young people. —H. M. Tomlinson
4. Those young men and women were pagan, hard, disillusioned, skeptical, and very likeable.—H. M. Tomlinson
5. Believe her sorry, and send for her.—Thomas Hardy
6. The higher animals are not larger than the lower because they are more complicated.—J. B. S. Haldane
7. A long day's march was before him, his object being to secure a dwelling to which he might take Eustacia when she became his wife. —Thomas Hardy
8. There is a close and necessary relation between those two, but they are not identical.—Alexander Meiklejohn
9. In secret she devoured the reports of medical commissions, the pamphlets of sanitary authorities, the histories of hospitals and homes.—Lytton Strachey
10. It is amusing and pathetic to observe this tendency in ourselves and in others.—James Harvey Robinson
11. "Well, he has beaten us," her Aunt said.—Thomas Hardy
12. Our documents are today very equivocal and our formulas of belief vague and uncertain.—Alexander Meiklejohn
13. At first some of the surgeons would have nothing to say to her, and, though she was welcomed by others, the majority were hostile and suspicious.—Lytton Strachey
14. "The American faith," it seems to me, is preferable to the usual expression, "the American dream."—Rexford G. Tugwell
15. No hunter, or fox-hunting farmer, would smile at what Thoreau says. —Charles D. Stewart
16. There will be sorties and withdrawals, but there will be no turning away to other fundamental purposes.—Rexford G. Tugwell
17. The characteristic discoveries of the age were physical, scientific, philosophical, political, critical.—Stuart Pratt Sherman
18. It is easy now to indict the American leaders of the years just past. —Rexford G. Tugwell
19. I must speak, Miss Vye, in spite of paining you.—Thomas Hardy
20. To chart the course of this recurrent ethical struggle, to judge its direction and force, is extremely difficult.—Rexford G. Tugwell
21. And yet he is a much more moral man than I, with a far more troublesome conscience.—Walter Prichard Eaton
22. If they fail us, we can change them; but if this purpose departs, then we are lost indeed.—Rexford G. Tugwell
23. With an amazing persistency, during the eight years that followed her rebuff over Salisbury Hospital, she struggled and worked and planned.—Lytton Strachey
24. He either didn't know which cadet I was or else he forgot what he wanted to see me about.—James Thurber

25. His sense of history has been accurate and so he has understood and taken advantage of the progressive drift.—Rexford G. Tugwell
26. But a new form, which shall be an equally good vehicle for instinct, and an equal help to spiritual growth, has not yet been developed. —Bertrand Russell
27. They were, in fact, thoroughly worthy specimens of the middle-class Englishman.—Esmé Wingfield-Stratford
28. The beneficent demon, doubt, whose name is Legion, and who dwells amongst the tombs of old faiths, enters into mankind and thenceforth refuses to be cast out.—T. H. Huxley
29. The god of work must be cast down from his ancient throne, and the divinity of enjoyment put in his place.—Henry Pratt Fairchild
30. In other words, the superkindergarten group set the social tone, and presently the intellectual tone, of the whole college.—Max McConn

Exercise 25. Diagraming (Review)

Diagram the following sentences:

1. That life is good which seems good to the men and women who live it.—Rexford G. Tugwell
2. If there were a pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow, I am certain that I could have dug it up long ago with any long-handled shovel. —Charles D. Stewart
3. They tell me that radio is still in its infancy, and sometimes I wish it would stay there.—Heywood Broun
4. To take any part of the earth into your heart transfuses it for you and for all men whom you can persuade to use your eyes.—Stuart Pratt Sherman
5. I have shown, I trust, how serious the need for such an institution is. —Max McConn
6. No state can allow them to pursue without hindrance or control these multifarious and conflicting desires.—Alexander Meiklejohn
7. When uninterrupted by some practical issue we are engaged in what is known as a *reverie.*—James Harvey Robinson
8. Only recently has he begun to glimpse the fact that wages are an identically important factor in the consuming power of the market. —Henry Pratt Fairchild
9. In what concerned the knowledge and control of Man himself, there had been scarcely the semblance of progress.—Esmé Wingfield-Stratford
10. Few of us take the pains to study the origin of our cherished convictions; indeed, we have a natural repugnance to so doing.—James Harvey Robinson
11. Whenever I start on a journey, I find that my choice lies between well-printed books which I have no desire to read, and well-written books which I could not read without permanent injury to my eyesight.—Max Beerbohm

12. But those who are both intellectually mediocre and poor should obviously go to work.—MAX McCONN
13. In every age the prevailing conditions of civilization have appeared quite natural and inevitable to those who grew up in them.—JAMES HARVEY ROBINSON
14. It was good training for the kind of warfare that was waged at Shiloh, but it had no connection with what was going on in Europe.—JAMES THURBER
15. If the sun shone over my left shoulder there was a bow curving to the right, and if the sun came over my right shoulder there was a bow extending off to the left.—CHARLES D. STEWART
16. It was inconceivable that Florence should dream of anything else; yet dream she did.—LYTTON STRACHEY
17. You can drop a mouse down a thousand-yard mine shaft and, on arriving at the bottom, it gets a slight shock and walks away.—J. B. S. HALDANE
18. Some of them make an inordinate fuss about catching the lesser technicalities and mannerisms of accepted masters of the trade.—VIRGINIA WOOLF
19. The last two oriole nests I have found had no horsehair in them, the reason being that there are no horses within a considerable distance from my house.—CHARLES D. STEWART
20. And I cannot help thinking that there is something in life he misses still.—WALTER PRICHARD EATON
21. "Where have you been, Clym?" she immediately said.—THOMAS HARDY
22. The coming of the automobile and the farm tractor has made the horsehair a rare commodity even out in the country.—CHARLES D. STEWART
23. What had occurred was, in brief, the complete breakdown of our medical arrangements at the seat of war.—LYTTON STRACHEY
24. Falling in love and winning love are often difficult tasks to overbearing and rebellious spirits; but to keep in love is also a business of some importance, to which both man and wife must bring kindness and goodwill.—R. L. STEVENSON
25. "O, this leaving you is hard to bear!" exclaimed Eustacia in a sudden whisper of anguish.—THOMAS HARDY
26. There was no other food besides the ordinary salt rations of ship diet; and even the water was sometimes so stored that it was out of reach of the weak.—LYTTON STRACHEY
27. The site of the fire was now merely a circle of ashes flecked with red embers and sparks, the furze having burnt completely away.—THOMAS HARDY
28. Propped up by pillows, she dimly recognised that some compliment was being paid her.—LYTTON STRACHEY
29. You wonder, after watching for a couple of hours, if he *can* look sideways.—CHRISTOPHER MORLEY
30. Men are free to worship or not to worship.—ALEXANDER MEIKLEJOHN

CHAPTER V

PUNCTUATION

INTRODUCTION

WHEN we come to study the rules of punctuation, we realize the importance of a knowledge of both grammar and sentence structure.

The need for punctuation arises from the needs of the reader. A sentence, being a group of thought units often presented in complex interrelationships, requires marking devices, or symbols, which will separate these thought units and present them in proper relationship to one another. The reader who sets out to read a sentence is very like a traveler entering a forest; if he has no map, compass, or landmarks, he can trust only his native wit and instinct to guide him. But if the trail has been blazed for him, he can easily find his way—provided, however, that he knows the meaning of the symbols which have been cut upon the trees.

Marks of punctuation are symbols, like blazes on trees, each one devised to give certain specific directions to the reader. Although they are used for a variety of purposes, each has its particular function and its especial usefulness. But, since they all have the same general aim—to make clear to the reader the relationships among the various thought-units of the sentence—it follows that they must be used both logically and consistently. If, for example, a scout blazing a trail should indicate a turn to the right when he meant a turn to the left, or should signify a halt when he intended the traveler to keep on, he would be guilty —to say the least—of an unpardonable inconsistency.

Even though the average reader does not know by rote the rules of punctuation, he has a reader's instinct for following the symbols. He knows that a comma marks a separation of elements, and that a semicolon marks a still greater separation; he expects some kind of enumeration after a colon. If a well-written sentence has also been clearly, logically, and consistently punctuated, he can thread his way through the interrelated thoughts. On the other hand, he is confused by a badly punctuated sentence.

There was a time in the history of writing when none of these marks of punctuation existed. Readers were left to their own devices—and a confusing time they must have had! Gradually, however, symbols began to come into use to meet the reader's need for guidance. The period, the comma, the semicolon, the colon, the question mark, the dash, the exclamation mark—all these represent refinements of punctuation which developed, over a long period of time, to meet one sole demand, clearness.

The uses to which these symbols could be put have often varied. Like all conventions, they have evolved through many stages. Writers, like scientists, have constantly experimented to obtain the best results. For example, the English writers of the nineteenth century used the comma and semicolon freely to break the sentence up into many units; we of the twentieth century have come to see that this practice is unnecessarily confusing, and have accordingly simplified our punctuation. Even today usage is not settled; the process of simplification is still going on. Yet it is progressing in a logical direction, guided always by consistent rules which still have one goal, clearness.

Clearness demands, as we have seen, a certain logical consistency. If each writer, taking the law into his own hands, should punctuate according to his own whim, as great confusion would result as if each scout should adopt his own private set of symbols, known only to himself, for blazing trails.

The logic of punctuation rests on grammar. If in punctuating we are to separate certain units and not others, we must know the nature of each unit and the function which it performs. Every rule of punctuation ever formulated has been predicated on the ability of the writer to make certain distinctions: to differentiate, for example, between a sentence and a phrase, and between a principal clause and a subordinate clause. Words, phrases, and clauses are the units with which a writer works, and if he would have his reader follow him, he must be able to distinguish them from each other, to arrange them, and above all to separate them in such a way that a sentence will unroll before the reader's eye with the ease and clearness of a well-charted map.

Usage, then, which mirrors the process of perpetual change through which language is ever passing, constantly reflects these changes as they affect theories of punctuation. So also, to meet the particular needs of a sentence, the current rules of punctuation must be altered to suit the occasion. There must be freedom under law; but, in the interests of clearness, some law must exist.

The current conventions of punctuation have been formulated, in as simplified a form as possible, in the following rules.

A. THE PERIOD

1. Use the period to close a declarative or imperative sentence.[1]

Examples: It is raining.
Shut the window.

2. Use a period following an abbreviation.

Examples: Mr. Stephen Smith
Washington, D. C.

Vol. 1, p. 315.

3. Periods (usually three)[2] **may be used to denote an omission in quoted matter, an unfinished statement, an inference, or a pause in the thought or narrative, or to create suspense.**

Examples:

Omission in quoted matter: Thoreau said: "If others pay the tax which is demanded of me . . . they abet injustice to a greater extent than the State requires."

Unfinished statement: When I think of the city fit for the high gods to live in which modern engineering might build . . . when I think of what Megalopolis might be. . . .—STUART CHASE

Inference: Here we are, as hot and scalding as ever, so that I begin to sweat reading the paper in bed. I have to go to town today, too. . . .—A. C. BENSON

Pause: All the carriers were speaking together, and in the midst of the uproar the lamentable voice of the chief agent was heard "giving it up" tearfully for the twentieth time that day. . . . He rose slowly. —JOSEPH CONRAD

To create suspense: "Ah! You speak of cold, but soon. . . ." He made a gesture of desperation.—LEONID ANDREYEV

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[1] The period also closes a request framed as a question.

Examples: Will you please shut the door.
Will you send me a statement of my account.

[2] At the end of a sentence four periods are used.

B. THE COMMA

1. Use a comma to separate principal clauses joined by coördinating conjunctions—*and, but, for, or, nor, neither.*[3]

Examples: His teachers were in despair, *and* his drawing master voiced the feeling of them all when he declared there was something about the boy which none of them understood.—WILLA CATHER

Most of us are already eager to accept intellectual ideals, *but* our very devotion to them forbids that we accept them blindly.—ALEXANDER MEIKLEJOHN

Discussion should be one of the most important things in the world, *for* it is almost our only arena of thinking.—RANDOLPH BOURNE

But she did not fall from the horse, *neither* was she riding fast.—WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

Exception: The principal clauses may be separated by a semicolon if they are long or are broken up by commas. (See D 2 (b) p. 156.

a. The comma may be omitted if the clauses are very short. But even when the clauses are short, the comma is often retained for the sake of emphasis, especially before the conjunctions *but, for, nor,* and *neither.*

Examples: They tell us very little *and* we tell them very little.—JAMES HARVEY ROBINSON

The windows were opened *and* children reappeared on the streets *and* great boughs of lilacs were sold.—LUDWIG LEWISOHN

It would be pleasant to wear silk stockings, *but* it is better to pay your taxes.—BERNARD DE VOTO

b. For purposes of punctuation the subordinating conjunctions ***while, whereas, though,*** *and* **although** *may also come under this rule.*

Examples: For her tenderness and devotion to him appear in all her letters, *though* we have not a single word addressed to him directly.—GAMALIEL BRADFORD

His government salary was little enough, *while* his wife had definite ideas about her proper position in the world.—STUART CHASE

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[3] According to a recent study of current usage, *so, then,* and *yet* are "moving into the category for which a comma is sufficient." See Sterling A. Leonard, *Current English Usage.* Chicago: The Inland Press, 1935, p. 19.

Wit is a lean creature with sharp inquiring nose, *whereas* humor has a kindly eye and comfortable girth.—CHARLES S. BROOKS

c. The comma is also used to separate two clauses, each of which is introduced by adjectives or adverbs in the comparative degree modified by **the.**

Example: The nearer he approached the house, the more absolutely unequal Paul felt to the sight of it all.—WILLA CATHER

d. Use a semicolon to separate the principal clauses if the coördinating conjunction between the principal clauses is omitted. (See D 1, p. 155.)

Example: The reputable scientist has never denied the possibilities that lie beyond the reach of our senses; he has only denied that science can tell anything about what lies beyond.—HENSHAW WARD

***Warning:* Avoid the "comma fault" or "comma splice."** Do not use a comma to separate two principal clauses unless they are joined by one of the coördinating conjunctions *and, but, for, or, nor, neither.*[4] A violation of this rule is called the "comma fault" or "comma splice," and is generally regarded in students as a sign of illiteracy.[5]

Example: Wrong: It is thundering, I think we shall have rain.

Two or more independent statements may be separated in any of the following ways:

(1) By one of the coördinating conjunctions *and, but, for, or, nor, neither,* usually preceded by a comma. (See Comma Rule 1, p. 142.)

Example: It is thundering, and I think we shall have rain.

(2) By a semicolon. (See Comma Rule 1 *d,* above and D 1, p. 155.)

Example: It is thundering; I think we shall have rain.

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[4] For *so, then,* and *yet,* see p. 142, n. 3.

[5] Experienced writers sometimes violate this rule to good effect, but the violation is always calculated and intentional. The inexperienced writer is advised to obey the rule implicitly until he has mastered the theory and practice of the sentence.

(3) By a period.

Example: It is thundering. I think we shall have rain.

Note: Three or more principal clauses in a series are frequently separated by commas instead of by semicolons. (See Rule 6, p. 149.)

Example: Right: She was the daughter of the woman who had sheltered him in Baltimore, he had known her almost since her infancy, and she had acted as a childish confidante during the course of one of the flirtations of his obscure years.—Joseph Wood Krutch

Whether to separate independent statements by a coördinating conjunction, by a semicolon, or by a period depends on the closeness of the relationship between the ideas. A coördinating conjunction implies a close relationship; a semicolon is used if the relationship is more remote, but not remote enough to justify employing two separate sentences; a period indicates that the ideas are not congruous enough to be included in the same sentence.

Examples: But the Chinese have nevertheless a humor all their own, for they always love a good joke.—Lin Yutang

There is not even an effort to reduce prices; they are fixed by open or tacit agreement by the two or three companies which dominate the situation.—Norman Thomas

Not the least important invasion of chemistry into agriculture is in foodstuffs. Virtually all foods, from wheat and corn to beans, can be made in the laboratory.—Wayne W. Parrish and Harold F. Clark

2. Use a comma to set off an introductory adverbial clause.

Examples: When it was discovered that long hours of slavery to a machine degraded men and women to the level of beasts, we introduced the regulation of the hours of labor.—Harold J. Laski

And as most of what they say to one another is said on the telephone or to the accompaniment of a jazz band, what they do say and the way they say it do not really seem to matter at all.—Mary Borden

Because in a living language it is impossible to draw the precise line infallibly between good and bad usage, we infer that there is no distinction and that one way of speech is always as good as another.—Paul Shorey

Note 1: *Long or ambiguous introductory phrases are also set off by commas.*

Example: Over and above my manifest ignorance of the early explorers and discoverers, I was deterred from treating them by a second consideration.—Stuart Pratt Sherman

Note 2: *When a conditional sentence is introduced by a verb, a comma is used to set off the condition from the conclusion.*

Example: Had they done nothing more than survive the terrible strain which had been put upon them, it would have been a matter for congratulation.—Lytton Strachey

3. Use a comma to set off non-restrictive phrases and clauses. A *restrictive* modifier restricts or limits the meaning of the word it modifies. To determine whether a modifier is restrictive, two tests can be applied. First, can the modifier be omitted without altering the meaning of the sentence? Second, does the phrase or clause mean *that particular one, or that particular kind of?*[6]

In the following sentences note that the non-restrictive modifiers are set off by commas but that the restrictive modifiers are not.

Examples: I live in a house which admits of less privacy (*restrictive*) than is desirable and decent before breakfast (*restrictive*).—Walter Prichard Eaton

But a great business man is simply a man who has amassed a large fortune (*restrictive*) without regard to the way (*restrictive*) in which he has attained it (*restrictive*).—Harold J. Laski

These things came to my mind as I stood in the quiet triangle of Oriel (*restrictive*).—Paul Elmer More

Merely to think is itself no easy task, as most of us know to our sorrow (*non-restrictive*).—John Livingston Lowes

The philosophy of living, which I have called American idealism (*non-restrictive*), is in its own nature sound, as is proved in a hundred directions (*non-restrictive*) where it has had full play (*restrictive*).—Henry Seidel Canby

[6] C. H. Ward, *What Is English?* Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1925, pp. 258-260. See also pp. 115-116.

In friendship and in love we are always humble, because we see that a free gift has been given us (*non-restrictive*); and to lose that humility because we have lost friendship or love (*restrictive*) is to take a pride in what should shame us. —A. Clutton-Brock

I have always liked the story of the old fellow who at home dressed very badly (*restrictive*) because everyone knew him (*restrictive*), and badly when he travelled (*restrictive*) because no one knew him (*restrictive*).—E. V. Lucas

Innocent as it may look (*non-restrictive*), a toothpick has repeatedly destroyed a perfectly good marriage.—Alexander Black

Year after year we struggle to make freshmen realize that thought is not their own until they have made it so (*restrictive*).—Howard Mumford Jones

I care not who writes the laws of a country so long as I may listen to its songs (*restrictive*).—George Jean Nathan

Thus we arrive at the theory that laughter, being something abnormal like an accident or an electric shock (*non-restrictive*), can play only a very small part in an ordinary man's life.—Robert Lynd

4. Use a comma to set off elements which are inserted or added for emphasis, particularly when they are introduced by *but, or, nor, not, only, yet, especially.*

Examples: I bear no grudge against the author of this discourse as an individual, *but only as a type.*—Frank Moore Colby

We can never really know the souls of others, *or even our own.*—Gamaliel Bradford

It is hard to believe that an English barrister, *and not a Texas ranchman,* described Boston as a town where respectability stalked unchecked.—Agnes Repplier

Fools and knaves do their business, *not so much by believing what is false, as by misusing what is true.*—L. P. Jacks

There are curious signs, *especially in what we may call the literature of New York,* of a growing sophistication that sneers at sentiment and the sentimental alike.—Henry Seidel Canby

a. When two elements are contrasted by the use of **not . . . but,** *usage favors the comma before both* **not** *and* **but.**

Example: What really matters for religious truth is, *not* to save it from criticism by outsiders, *but* to save it from betrayal by insiders.—L. P. JACKS

b. Usually omit the comma before the second of a pair of correlative conjunctions (*e.g.,* **both . . . and, neither . . . nor, not only . . . but also**) *except where they introduce principal clauses.* (See Rule 1, p. 142.)

Example: But *neither* Great Britain *nor* the United States had any interest in perpetuating the Versailles regime.—WALTER LIPPMANN

5. Use the comma to set off independent elements and appositives; to set off *yes* and *no* when used at the beginning of a sentence; also to set off the declaratory from the interrogative element of a sentence which contains both.

a. Independent elements:

(1) Mild interjections.

Example: Oh, how extraordinarily nice workmen were, she thought.—KATHERINE MANSFIELD

(2) Direct address.

Example: Please, *sir,* it was the other fellow.—LEONARD WOOLF

(3) Parenthetical expressions and sentence modifiers.

Examples: The wise use of leisure, *it must be conceded,* is a product of civilization.—BERTRAND RUSSELL

Generally speaking, however, the use of a word reflects the spirit of the time, and an investigation of "connotation," *as the rhetoricians call it,* is really an excursion into social science.—KATHERINE FULLERTON GEROULD

(4) Nominative absolute.

Example: One shoe tapping a nervous beat on the floor, he played the hysterical tunes of the "sixties."
—GLENWAY WESCOTT

b. Appositives:

Examples: The age-long symbol of the home, *the family hearth,* is a symbol also of our national difference.—John Langdon-Davies

Time, *the old-clothes man,* thus furnishes his customers with many strange misfits.—Samuel McChord Crothers

This is the essential Puritan idea, *that God can only be praised by direct contemplation of him.*—G. K. Chesterton

Note the following exceptions:

(1) Omit the comma when the appositive is restrictive. (A restrictive appositive designates a particular person or thing, or a particular kind of person or thing.)

Examples: Dickens' story *A Christmas Carol* has become a classic.
He was born in the year *1808.*
The poet *Milton* was distinguished by his passionate sincerity.

(2) Omit the comma when an intensive pronoun is used as appositive.

Examples: He did it *himself.*
He *himself* did it.

(3) Prefer dashes or parentheses for a long or detached appositive group. (See F 3, p. 159; J 1, p. 161.)

Example: The great fault of Arnold's definition of culture—*contact with the best that has been said and thought in the world*—is that it disposes, ruthlessly and frankly, of everyone who does not, for example, know Greek.—Katherine Fullerton Gerould

c. **Yes** *and* **no** *when used at the beginning of a sentence.*

Example: No, the problem is not easily solved.—Theodore Morrison

d. To set off the declaratory from the interrogative element of a sentence which contains both.

Examples: You are coming, *aren't you?*
He didn't say that, *did he?*

6. In accordance with the following rules, use a comma to separate elements in a series:

a. In a series like **red, white, and (or) blue** *separate the elements by commas.*

(1) If there is a conjunction (like *and*) between the last two elements, place a comma before the conjunction.
(2) Do not place a comma following the last element in the series unless some other rule of punctuation applies.

Examples: It is certain that a lady hiker in *rough tweed breeches, silk hose, thick walking shoes, and lipstick* has an amphibious air, as she takes a train for an outing up the Hudson.—JOHN LANGDON-DAVIES

The special appeal of this theme is *that the emotional discovery of America has been going on for a very long time, that it is still going on,* and *that it will go on after we are all dead and forgotten.*—STUART PRATT SHERMAN

b. In a series like **red and (or) white,** *or* **red and (or) white and (or) blue,** *where* all *the elements are connected by* **and (or),** *omit the comma except where it is necessary for emphasis.*

Examples: Abraham and Marcus Aurelius and Confucius would find much in common.—SAMUEL MCCHORD CROTHERS

In morals or economics or politics or social problems every sincere reasoner has to begin at the beginning.—BURGES JOHNSON

We have grown lucid, and logical, and humane, and incompetent.—AGNES REPPLIER
(commas inserted for emphasis)

c. In a series like **the red warning flag,** *where the modifiers are not coördinate, omit the comma.*

The following test may be applied to determine whether or not the modifiers are coördinate (*i.e.,* similar in function): May *and* (*but, or*) be inserted between them without altering the meaning? If it may, the modifiers are coördinate and the comma is necessary; if it may not, the modifiers are not coördinate and the comma is omitted. For example, a *red warning flag* is a warning flag that is red. Since *red* modifies the phrase *warning flag, and* may not be inserted between them. Therefore the two adjectives are not coördinate. On the other hand, a *red, warning flag* is a flag that is both red and warning. Since *and* may be inserted between them without changing the sense, they are coördinate.

This test is a test of meaning. As has been seen in the examples just given, the same sentence may be punctuated in two different ways, with consequent differences in meaning.

Examples: *Coördinate:* The *still, sad* music of humanity.—WORDSWORTH (*And* may be inserted; if it were omitted, the phrase might be interpreted to mean that the music was still sad.)

Coördinate: The glory of a *firm, capacious* mind.—POPE (*And* may be inserted without changing the sense.)

Not coördinate: *Three blind* mice. (*And* may not be inserted.)

Not coördinate: He was irked by our *vacillating foreign* policy. (*And* may not be inserted without changing the sense.)

d. If a series is composed of items in pairs, grouped together, do not break up the pairs by a comma.

Examples: But why the people who are chiefly occupied in *eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage,* should wish to have their lives turned inside out on the news stands passes comprehension.—HENRY VAN DYKE

Furthermore, there was admirable directness and positiveness in the old ethics regarding *right and wrong, truth and error, freedom and responsibility, rewards and punishments.*—EDWARD GRANT CONKLIN

7. Use a comma to separate elements that might be improperly read together.

Example: *Ever since, our wood-basket* has had hidden under the logs of maple and hickory a stick or two of the battered old whalers. —FRANCES LESTER WARNER

8. Use a comma to separate dates, addresses, etc.

Examples: Willa Siebert Cather was born near Winchester, Virginia, December 7, 1876.—*Living Authors*

Born January 4, 1878, at Folkestone, England, Coppard was sent to the Lewes Road Board School to commence his education.—*Living Authors*

9. Use the comma before a direct quotation. (For the punctuation of dialogue, see C, pp. 152-154.)

Example: He said, "I am glad to see you."

Note: When a fragment of a quotation is incorporated in a sentence, omit the comma and do not capitalize the first word of the quotation. (Compare C 2, p. 152.)

Example: Huxley often spoke of his "belief in a fixed order of nature," and twice referred to his belief as a "faith."—HENSHAW WARD

10. Use the comma after a salutation in a personal letter.[7]

Examples: Dear Bob,
Dear Mr. Booth,

11. Do not use a comma without definite reason.

a. Unless one of the foregoing rules applies, do not separate the subject from the verb, or a verb from its object or predicate complement, even if the subject, object, or predicate complement is a noun clause, or an infinitive or gerund used as a substantive. (See pp. 117-118; 108-109.)

Examples: To watch your ball carry the distant bunker or to see a long putt go tinkling into the cup is to receive a perfectly definite and tangible reward for your pains and skill.—BLISS PERRY

It has always seemed to me a pity that new diseases are invariably named after the doctor instead of the patient. —THOMAS L. MASSON

How the earth keeps up a necessary amount of whirling in the old twenty-four-hour limit is more than we can understand.—DALLAS LORE SHARP

Can it be that the sentiment or fancy which is sown in our minds in childhood and lies asleep and forgotten in us through most of our years, revives and acquires toward the end a new and strange significance when we have entered upon our second childhood?—W. H. HUDSON
(Comma is used for clearness. See Rule 7, p. 150.)

b. Do not separate the elements of a compound subject or predicate except for clearness, or for emphasis.

Examples: Once I happened to be in Columbia and visited a cemetery where many of South Carolina's illustrious dead are buried. —MEREDITH NICHOLSON

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[7] The colon is preferred after the salutation in a business letter. (See E 4, p. 158.)

I mean the habit of turning loose a handful of punctuation marks like a flock of bacteria to browse all over the page, and even eat their way into the insides of apparently healthy words.—MAX EASTMAN
(comma for emphasis)

A book may be genuinely great without being in the least popular, or may be immensely popular without having any important elements of greatness.—CARL VAN DOREN
(comma for emphasis)

Who could bear a repetition of such things, and live?—AGNES REPPLIER
(comma for emphasis)

C. QUOTATIONS[8] AND DIALOGUE

1. Enclose a direct, but not an indirect, quotation in quotation marks.

Examples: He said, "I will come." (direct quotation)
He said that he would come. (indirect quotation)

2. Capitalize the first word of every quotation.[9]

Examples: "Come here," he said.
He said, "Come here."

3. Use a comma to separate a quotation from an introductory or concluding "label" (*e.g., he said*).[10]

Examples: He said, "I am glad to see you."
"I am glad to see you," he said.

4. When a quoted sentence is broken by a "label" (*e.g., he said*), punctuate as follows:

a. If the second part of the quotation continues a sentence begun in the first part:

(1) Separate the first part of the quotation from the label by a comma. (See Rules C 3 and C 5.)

(2) Follow the label by a comma.

(3) Do not capitalize the first word of the second part of the quotation.

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[8] For other uses of quotation marks, see pp. 277-278.

[9] For exception, see *"Note"* under B 9, p. 151.

[10] The colon is sometimes preferred following an introductory label. (See E 2, p. 157.) If the quotation consists of only one word, the comma is usually omitted.
Example: The sentry called "Halt!"

Examples: "It is late," she said, "and we should be going home."
"Though what you say is true," he replied, "it makes no difference."

b. If the second part of the quotation begins an independent clause:

(1) Separate the first part of the quotation from the label by a comma. (See Rules C 3 and C 5.)

(2) Follow the label by a period or semicolon.

(3) If the label is followed by a period, capitalize the first word of the second part of the quotation.

(4) If the label is followed by a semicolon, do not capitalize the first word of the second part of the quotation.[11]

Examples: *Wrong:* "It is late," she said, "we should be going home."
Right: "It is late," she said; "we should be going home."
Right: "It is late," she said. "We should be going home."
Wrong: "Going?" he said, "of course I'm going."
Right: "Going?" he said. "Of course I'm going."
Wrong: "How absurd you are!" she replied, "you can't mean what you say."
Right: "How absurd you are!" she replied. "You can't mean what you say."

Note: The foregoing sentences which are marked "wrong" may be subjected to the following test: treat the quotation as if it were not broken by the label. The "comma fault" (or "comma splice") would result. (See pp. 143-144.)

Examples (*label omitted*):
Wrong: "It is late, we should be going home."
Wrong: "Going? of course I'm going."
Wrong: "How absurd you are! you can't mean what you say."

5. Place inside the quotation marks all periods and commas which follow a quotation.[12]

Examples: *Right:* "You are right," he said.
Rare: "You are right", he said.
Right: He said, "You are right."
Rare: He said, "You are right".

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[11] Unless it be the pronoun *I*, or a proper noun.

[12] Occasionally style manuals prescribe that punctuation marks should be placed outside the quotation marks unless the quotation marks are a part of the quoted matter. A few departments of the United States Government follow this practice, but they represent the exception, not the rule.

6. Place outside the quotation marks all marks of punctuation except commas and periods unless these marks of punctuation apply only to the quotation, not to the sentence as a whole.

Examples: *Right:* The spectators shouted, "We want a touchdown!"
Right: How stupid she was to say, "I don't know"! (The exclamation point applies to the sentence as a whole.)
Right: He asked, "May I come in?"
Right: Did he say, "I won't come"? (The question mark applies to the sentence as a whole.)
Right: Take a "tip": stay away from the party.
Right: He took the "tip"; I did not see him at the party.

7. Use no additional marks of punctuation if the quotation is closed by a question mark or exclamation point.

Examples: *Wrong:* "Wait a minute!," he commanded.
Right: "Wait a minute!" he commanded.
Right: He commanded, "Wait a minute!"
Wrong: He asked, "Are you there?".
Right: He asked, "Are you there?"
Right: "Are you there?" he asked.

8. Enclose in single quotation marks a quotation within a quotation; enclose in double quotation marks a quotation of the third rank (*i.e.,* a quotation within a quotation within a quotation).[13]

Example: He said, "My favorite soliloquy in *Hamlet* is 'To be or not to be.' "

9. In dialogue, usually begin a new paragraph to indicate a change in the speaker.

Example:

Both the Count and his wife seemed pleased to listen to me.

"And how did he shoot?" asked the Count.

"How? Let me tell you. He would see a fly on the wall. . . . You laugh? Madam ———, I swear to you this is true. 'Eh! Kouska! a pistol!' Kouska would bring one loaded. Crack! there lay the fly flattened against the wall."

"What consummate skill!" cried the Count.—ALEXANDER PUSHKIN

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[13] Some authors, reversing the common practice, use single quotation marks for all direct quotations and double quotation marks for quotations within quotations, etc.

D. THE SEMICOLON

1. Use the semicolon as a small period.

a. A semicolon may be used instead of a period to separate two principal clauses not *joined by* **and, but, for, or, nor,** *and* **neither** *when these clauses are closely related in meaning.*[14]

Examples: The modern factory hand is passive; he makes nothing; his product is standardized.—George Boas

It is a mistake to suppose that only the intelligent have definite opinions; the most definite opinions are held by the unintelligent, and they also hold them most strongly.—Edgar J. Goodspeed

b. A semicolon may be used instead of a period to separate two principal clauses joined by one of the conjunctive adverbs: ***accordingly, again, also, besides, consequently, finally, further, furthermore, hence, however, indeed, likewise, moreover, nevertheless, notwithstanding, otherwise, so (therefore),***[15] ***still, then,***[15] ***therefore, thereupon, thus, wherefore, yet.***[15]

Examples: Science is in the first instance merely disinterested curiosity, the desire to know for knowing's sake; *yet* in the long run the new knowledge always brings new practical power.—Julian Huxley

You cannot impose your temperamental differences on other people; *therefore,* if you are right, they are wrong.—Felix Adler

First it put out its head and evidently took stock of the landscape; *then* it began, quite surely and serenely, to plod toward the water.—The Drifter

Warning: **The comma should not be used as a substitute for a semicolon** in either of the instances just mentioned. This use of the comma alone (without a coördinating conjunction) is called the "comma fault" or "comma splice";[16] it is usually conclusive evidence that the writer has failed to grasp the theory of the sentence. An experienced writer will sometimes violate the rule in order to obtain some special effect, but such a violation is deliberate and premeditated. The student, however, should learn the rules before he attempts to break them intelligently.

[14] See p. 142, n. 3.
[15] See p. 142, n. 3.
[16] See p. 143.

Examples: *Wrong:* He did not come yesterday, however, I am expecting him today.

Right: He did not come yesterday; however, I am expecting him today.

Right: He did not come yesterday. However, I am expecting him today.

Wrong: The wind is blowing, we shall probably have snow before tomorrow.

Right: The wind is blowing; we shall probably have snow before tomorrow.

Right: The wind is blowing. We shall probably have snow before tomorrow.

2. Use a semicolon as a large comma.

a. A semicolon may be used as a large comma—a "super-comma"—to separate elements in a series when the series itself is either long or broken up by commas.

Examples: In time we may even come to realize that we are not the richest, luckiest, happiest, most generous people that ever lived on this earth; that our financiers are not Wizards; our bankers, Pillars of Society; our million-dollar executives, Supermen; our petty politicians, Astute Statesmen. —Robert Herrick

On these roads the lark in summer is continually heard; nests are plentiful in the hedges and dry ditches; and on the grassy banks, and at the foot of the bowed dikes, the blue-eyed speedwell smiles its benison on the passing wayfarer. —Alexander Smith

b. A semicolon may be used as a large comma (as in "a," above) to separate two principal clauses joined by **and, but, for, or, nor,** *or* **neither** *when these clauses are long or are broken up by commas.*

Examples: Let us learn, then, that energy of faith which enables us to live constantly in the vision of the good; and let us descend, in action, into the world of fact with that vision always before us.—Bertrand Russell

One feels as if one were standing in front of a breaking wave of a substance more like cloud-stuff than water, yet like the sea; for the whole hillside is luminously and transparently pale, and reticulated with mineral veins that are blue and green like sea water.—Rebecca West

Note: Since the semicolon marks a perceptible break in a sentence, it should not be employed to separate clauses joined by conjunctions unless the writer desires either to make a clear separation of the clauses or to add emphasis. In the following sentence a comma is sufficient:

Example: Clarinet players frequently know whether they are playing upon an A or a B flat clarinet, but triangle players are notoriously ignorant of the make and peculiarities of their instrument.—Alexander Brent-Smith

E. THE COLON [17]

1. Use the colon to indicate a pause before a formal enumeration. When there is no pause, the colon is omitted.

Examples: But perhaps there are two major difficulties: biography may be so simple that anybody can practice it, even without instruction; or it may be so exacting that nobody can teach it.—Claude M. Fuess

Even when thinking is used in a broad sense, it is usually restricted to matters not directly perceived: to what we do not see, smell, hear, or touch.—John Dewey

I should have liked to see a sheet of paper soldiers, a toy drum, a monkey on a stick, a cat's cradle, a buzzer.—Earnest Elmo Calkins
(colon omitted—no pause before the enumeration)

Note: Two restrictions are placed upon the use of the colon.

(1) What a colon introduces must end the sentence.

(2) A series of elements introduced by a colon may not occupy more than one sentence.

Examples: *Wrong:* My reasons are these: first your plan is impractical. Second, it is unethical.

Right: My reasons are these: first, your plan is impractical; second, it is unethical.

Right: My reasons are these. First, your plan is impractical. Second, it is unethical.

2. The colon may be used, instead of a comma, to introduce a quotation, especially if it is formal or long.

Examples: A few days later, in Edinburgh, I came upon a note in a London newspaper, and read it to the family:

"This is the season when the oldest inhabitant of our villages hides behind a tree and imitates the call of the cuckoo for the gratification of the American tourist."—Robert M. Gay

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[17] A capital often is employed after a colon to indicate that what follows either is quoted or has independent importance.

Here is the tenth line of "Hyperion": "But where the dead leaf fell, there it did rest."—John Livingston Lowes

Note: Usage is divided as to whether a colon or a comma should precede informal quotations or short quotations.

Examples: As a prominent half-back once said: "I don't run back punts for my health."—Robert Littell

In Europe the epigram passes round, "Everything in America is upon a belt."—Hilaire Belloc

3. The colon may be used to introduce an explanatory or amplifying phrase or clause.

Examples: Many a European library is proud to be so individual as to be arranged haphazard: to allow a man to browse among its books at the expense of their continual misplacing.—Hilaire Belloc

A century earlier, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was an illustrious example of this tendency: that splendid comet, after filling half the heavens, vanished suddenly into desolation and darkness.—Lytton Strachey

4. Use a colon after the salutation in a business letter.

Example: Dear Sir:

Note: In a personal letter, the comma is more frequently used.

Examples: Dear Mr. Eddington,
Dear Jim,

F. THE DASH[18]

1. Use the dash to mark an unexpected break in the thought or construction, or a faltering in speech.

Examples: Poor—no, not *poor* M. Journmand! I warned myself against pitying him.—Max Beerbohm

Football law, football hygiene, the drama of football, football ballistics, football histology, the aesthetics of football—there is no area of human knowledge in which the football could not make at least a first down.—Robert Littell

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[18] Modern usage now sanctions omitting the comma before or after the dash.

2. Use the dash to separate a series of appositive elements from a summarizing word or expression.

Examples: Whatever is felt upon the page without being specifically named there—that, it seems to me, is created.—Willa Cather

O. Henry asks us to imagine the unimaginable—that is his crime.—O. W. Firkins

3. Use the dash to set off long or emphatic parenthetical or appositive expressions.

Examples: He [Lincoln] was the foremost to deny liberty to the South, and he had his sensible doubts about the equality between the negro and the white man; but he actually treated everybody—the Southern rebel, the negro slave, the Northern deserter, the personal enemy—in a just and kindly spirit. —Herbert Croly

In all contests that require sustained effort—distance running and cross-country running, for example—we are far behind. —John Corbin

A short fat man passed in pursuit of her—an elderly man in a black alpaca jacket that billowed.—Max Beerbohm

4. Use the dash to add suspense before a climax.

Examples: I could not help, however, smiling at the phantom of wealth which her dear imagination had conjured up out of a clear income of a poor—hundred pounds a year.—Charles Lamb

Such men seem to us to have succeeded—if some one else tells us that their work is highly regarded.—Alexander Meiklejohn

5. Use the dash, preferably, preceding such introductory expressions as *namely, that is, to wit, e.g., i.e., as, viz.*

Note: These expressions are normally followed by a comma; if the writer wishes to indicate importance or to show formality, he may prefer a colon.[19]

Examples: Magic, then, in so far as it is efficacious and true, might be described as a kind of psychological machinery—that is, a set of devices by which the human being is enabled to avail himself of augmented psychological power, to raise his vitality.—T. K. Whipple

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[19] For an excellent discussion of the authoritativeness and logic of this rule, see C. H. Ward, *What Is English?* Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1925, p. 275 ff.

> Perhaps the key to his [Poe's] morbidity may be found in a negative characteristic of his writings which has not yet been mentioned—namely, their complete sexlessness.—JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH
>
> The workers in this dangerous trade are required to adopt (like Mohamet's coffin) a detached standpoint—that is, to write as if they took no interest in the subject.—PHILIP GUEDALLA

Exceptions:

(1) If these expressions are preceded by a parenthesis, omit the dash.

> *Example:* Because it is beautiful (*i.e.,* because it accords with certain sentiments) it must be true, and because it must be true, therefore it is true.—BERNARD DE VOTO

(2) If these expressions are used by themselves, parenthetically, they are set off by commas.

> *Examples:* But the phenomenon itself, in some form or other, I am sure, is familiar to everyone; everyone, *that is,* must be conscious at times of possessing a peculiar abundance of vigor, and at other times of its dearth.—T. K. WHIPPLE
>
> In my first two years, *for example,* I worked at English and political economy and read philosophy.—LINCOLN STEFFENS

G. THE QUESTION MARK

1. Use a question mark to close a direct, but not an indirect, question.

Examples: *Direct question:* Who is he?
Indirect question: I asked who he was.

2. Use a question mark (often in parentheses) to indicate the writer's doubt concerning the accuracy of a statement.

Examples: Solon, born in 639 B.C. (?), was an Athenian lawyer.
Solon (639?-559 B.C.) was an Athenian lawyer.

Caution: Do not use the question mark to label humorous or ironical statements—as, *He was a great (?) leader.*

H. THE EXCLAMATION POINT

Use an exclamation point following an exclamation, a peremptory command, or an exclamatory expression.

Examples:

> His expression changed as he held one of them up to the declining sun. "Why, these aren't diamonds! There's something the matter!"
>
> "By golly!" exclaimed Kismine, with a startled look. "What an idiot I am!"
>
> "Why, these are rhinestones!" cried John.—F. SCOTT FITZGERALD
>
> "Driving along, or waiting for a fare on the corner," he said, "all of a sudden pooff! a cannon ball exploding here, pooff! a cannon ball there, ratt-ratt! a machine gun."—JOHN REED

I. THE APOSTROPHE

1. Use the apostrophe to form the possessive case of nouns. (For rules governing formation of the possessive case, see pp. 82-83.)

2. Use the apostrophe as a substitute for an omitted letter of a word.

Example: Don't, it's (*i.e., it is,* not the possessive pronoun).

3. Use the apostrophe to form the plural of figures, letters, and words used without regard to their meaning.

Examples: I mistake your *o's* for *a's*.
Delete all the *very's* in your sentence.

J. PARENTHESES

1. Use parentheses to enclose explanatory or parenthetical matter which is only loosely connected with the main thought of the sentence.[20]

Example: The originality (if I may use the term) of the man is surprising.

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[20] *Punctuation:* (1) Place a mark of punctuation inside the parenthesis if it relates only to matter within the parenthesis; otherwise, place it outside.

Examples: You told me that he made fifty (or was it forty?) dollars a week.
If I were you (as, fortunately, I am not), I should not go.

(2) Do not place a comma in front of a parenthesis unless the parenthesis encloses only a numeral.

Example: The reasons for his objections were: (1) The plan was impractical, (2) public sentiment was against it, and (3) precedent would be violated.

2. Use parentheses to enclose supplementary material, such as names, dates, etc.

Examples: He describes the great capital Cambulac (Peiping).
He had been taken prisoner by that time (1824).

3. Use parentheses to enclose confirmatory figures or symbols.

Example: I enclose my check for five dollars ($5.00).

K. BRACKETS

1. Use brackets to enclose interpolated matter which the writer inserts within a quotation or text.

Example: Stuart Pratt Sherman says, "What other people observed, he [Whitman] experienced."

2. Use brackets instead of parentheses when parenthetical matter occurs within another parenthesis.

Example: Stuart Pratt Sherman said that what other people observed, he (Whitman [1819-1892]) experienced.

Exercise 26. Punctuation

By reference to specific rules explain the punctuation (or lack of punctuation) in the following sentences:

1. Education as a political weapon could not exist if we respected the rights of children. If we respected the rights of children, we should educate them so as to give them the knowledge and the mental habits required for forming independent opinions; but education as a political institution endeavors to form habits and to circumscribe knowledge in such a way as to make one set of opinions inevitable.—BERTRAND RUSSELL
2. The sentiment, you will say, is innocent and pious enough, but it points unmistakably to the other tendency of the day, that humanitarian notion of indistinguishing sympathy which is rapidly becoming the religion of the people and the theme of serious literature to the exclusion of other ideals.—PAUL ELMER MORE
3. Mrs. Lidcote had arrived at this hypothesis simply by listening to the conversation of the persons sitting next to her on the deck—two lively young women with the latest Paris hats on their heads and the latest New York ideas born in them.—EDITH WHARTON

4. The startling thing that strikes his ears is the thunder of electric cars clanging past these houses on their steel rails all day—and all night. Wealth and opportunity in America connote the very opposites of what they do in Europe: extreme neatness, rarity of detail, a hospitable cleanliness of bath, drains, sinks; facile communication, plenty of noise and metal—and no seclusion. With us, wealth—especially wealth long possessed—is marked by an extreme of seclusion; a horror of noise; a carefully acquired distance from communications; a good deal of dust on old books and furniture; a mass of detail in every kind of reading and picture and chance-inherited or picked-up whatnots by the hundred; repose, and (especially with the English gentry) what they call Froust—which some of them call Fug.—HILAIRE BELLOC
5. Almost all education has a political motive: it aims at strengthening some group, natural or religious or even social, in the competition with other groups.—BERTRAND RUSSELL
6. The Magdelen choir boys—the sweetest songsters in all Oxford—mount to the top of that most beautiful of Gothic towers, and, standing among the pinnacles—pinnacles afire with the spirituality of the Middle Ages, that warms all the senses with purity and beauty—those boys, I say, on that tower and among those pinnacles, open their mouths and sing a Latin song to greet the May.—JOHN CORBIN
7. In such young ideals there is often a fashion, and the fashions are apt to change from time to time. When I was a small boy, both I and most other small boys of my own age and period—the mighty mid-Victorian—were wont to indulge in a day-dream of wildest audacity—to wit, that on some wonderful birthday morning one would be awakened by the sound of a pawing and a crunching of the gravel outside, that one would spring from bed with beating heart, would fling wide the lattice-window, and looking down would see on the carriage-drive a neatly attired groom holding the bridle of a peerless pony, a cream-colored pony—it was always cream-colored—with a long flowing tail (it always had a long flowing tail).—KENNETH GRAHAME
8. Joy and sorrow in this world pass into each other, mingling their forms and their murmurs in the twilight of life as mysterious as an overshadowed ocean, while the dazzling brightness of supreme hopes lies far off, fascinating and still, on the distant edge of the horizon. —JOSEPH CONRAD
9. Similarly the rightness of the cave woman when she twined scarlet berries in her hair does not imply the rightness of the London lady who spends five guineas on a petticoat or a hundred guineas on an evening cloak.—REBECCA WEST
10. Proportioned and exquisitely shaped, he looked like a living arrow, formed to shoot through the water.—RICHARD JEFFERIES
11. He can pity the stupidity which does not perceive that it is checked and betrayed, but penetration allied to indifference awakens his wondering contempt.—AGNES REPPLIER
12. The false ideas of the history of the world which are taught in the

various countries are of a kind which encourages strife and serves to keep alive a bigoted nationalism.—Bertrand Russell

13. But her ignorance is only one more reason why she is haunted by a distorted image of a great new world rising on the other side of an Atlantic which is no longer very wide.—Joseph Wood Krutch
14. But it is not necessary to disparage the practical or business training demanded by a commercial age in order to justify the claims of that training of the imagination and the emotions which comes from the study of poetry.—Fred N. Scott
15. Bernard Shaw's famous passage about the ruthless selfishness of the artist, who will sacrifice everyone and everything to his fundamental purpose, is but a practical statement of what every woman knows . . . and does.—Ernest Boyd

Exercise 27. Punctuation

Punctuate correctly the following sentences. Justify your decisions by reference to specific rules.

1. If one could put all his ideas in one word it would be the masterwork.
2. The heart gives wit but wit does not give the heart.
3. There was a moment of throbbing suspense and then to the surprise and comfort of the party it was plain that the august presence had gone by for its dreadful noise was receding.
4. It is too late to bewail our hard luck so let us forget it.
5. Woman often changes foolish he who trusts her.
6. The faith that stands on authority is not faith.
7. A volume by B. A. Hinsdale entitled President Garfield and Education published in 1882 provided me with a direct quotation from an address made by General Garfield at a banquet there in 1871.
8. Love life but love it not for vulgar pleasures for miserable ambitions.
9. Its mile-breadth of water seemed an ocean to them in the shadowy twilight and the vague riband of trees on the further shore the verge of a continent which surely none but they had ever seen before.
10. When we grow dull and unadventurous and slothfully content with our present conditions and old habits it is not that we are traditionalists it is on the contrary that we have ceased to feel the formative spirit of our own traditions.
11. If we all could have all we want if we could be sated with all our hearts desires and if we could live recklessly for a day without regard for our future do you suppose that by any chance we should be happier than we are now.
12. When the Emperor saw Goethe for the first time he said to him you are a great man how did he know.
13. Our education such of it as is of durable importance comes somewhat haphazard.
14. Bravo now that a great astronomer has said it we others may safely repeat it.

15. Goods are something which are to be used they are not the measure of happiness and success.
16. One of Mr. Mencken's incidental revelations provides a succinct if vulgar summary of the statistics that verify it [quote] if you want to be listed in Who's Who in America your first step should be to get yourself born in Vermont and three of the next five best birthplaces are the New England States.
17. We deny him all the privacy he may not marry whom he chooses consort with whom he prefers dress according to his taste or live where he pleases.
18. So it is not in vain perhaps to try clumsily to tell how this delicious uneasiness first captured the spirit of one who if not a poet is at least a lover of poetry.
19. The wicked are wicked no doubt and they go astray and they fall and they come by their deserts but who can tell the mischief which the very virtuous do.
20. Here was what seemed to be the passage from which by a liberal amount of trimming and torturing the illustrator's epigram had been adduced [quote] I am not willing that this discussion should close said Garfield without mention of the value of a true teacher. Give me a log hut with only a simple bench Mark Hopkins at one end and I at the other and you may have all the buildings apparatus and libraries without him.
21. Nature in her not too infinite wisdom has endowed men with the gift of cynicism as the only possible counterweight to the all-consuming selfishness of women.
22. I took an interest in his troubles I loaned him money patched up a quarrel between himself and his wife gave him books to read tried to help him slide a little more easily along his white-collar groove.
23. Himself a liberal he has to grind out a thousand words daily which reflect the ultraconservative policy of the paper for which he works.
24. But there is no royal road to learning there is not even a short road to a competent general intelligence.
25. The first outline of the first effort at the humanization of knowledge was Plato's Dialogues.
26. By October 1849 he P. T. Barnum had become infatuated with the idea of bringing Jenny Lind to America.
27. When side-shows enticed by the vast popularity of his own spectacle started to operate near by he fitted out a circus company that performed at the same time and place with his main entertainment then if opposition of any sort threatened he combined both of his companies at a single price of admission and competition thus became impossible.
28. Naturally enough therefore at the close of his engagement with Miss Lind he had decided that it was high time for him to rest from his labors in order to cultivate life's amenities.
29. I find that a leisured stride is the best rhythm to start an essay for it is by an easy vibration and tuning of the legs that the message flashes with the least interference out of space.

30. There are naturally degrees of invalidism there are amateur and professional invalids.
31. Now the real invalid that is the professional who develops the right technique never allows a disease or ailment to get the best of him.
32. A middle-aged man who has always as they say enjoyed good health is perfectly useless.
33. The great difficulty however is that men persist in spite of bitter experience in looking upon growing up as a worthy thing.
34. Cows even for a majority of those who like them are probably an acquired taste and there are doubtless still larger numbers of human beings who never acquire it.
35. There was a time when a California court set aside a conviction because in the indictment the letter n was accidentally omitted from the word larceny a Texas court held fatal the omission of the word to in the expression intent to kill and murder.
36. As the Chinese philosopher said if you wish to convert a man you must persuade him that when he does well he is obeying the dictates of his own heart.
37. One thing is sure as long as there are people in this world whose guiding principle is the use of other people's brains there can be no decline and fall of letter-writing.
38. There was for example the importunate correspondent who wrote to Dickens for a donkey and said he would call for it the next day as though Dickens kept a herd of donkeys in Tavestock Square and could always spare one for an emergency.
39. Historically speaking there are two schools of individualism one American associated with the name of Jefferson and the other English associated with the name of Cobden.
40. The Canterbury Tales themselves are of course far from original and the plan upon which they were built came from The Decameron in which nobles of Florence fleeing from the plague amuse themselves by telling stories to each other.
41. Women can civilize a society and men cannot.
42. I climbed to the surface at last my teeth chattering from the long immersion.
43. Every cynic knows that his optimism dates from the moment when he began to lose his youthful belief in human perfectibility and his youthful conviction that he was born to help to improve it.
44. If the infinitesimal minority of civilized and therefore skeptical minds became a majority the cynic would have a rude awakening something would have to be done to restore his disbelief in humanity.
45. These are the qualities which lend color to life the qualities which made Robinson Crusoe a best seller.
46. Coming into Manhattan I begin to feel a strange uneasiness like a slight attack of seasickness leaving it I suddenly grow more cheerful.
47. Indeed subways have been shrewdly designated by Mr. E. K. Lindley as feedpipes for skyscrapers constituting the perfect vicious circle the higher the skyscrapers the more subways are dug to feed them.

48. Does the word enervating mean soothing exciting distressing invigorating or weakening.
49. When the late Maurice Barrymore was once holding forth in his exuberant humor an intoxicated bystander rudely interrupted by crying out you're a liar. Barrymore was known to be a handy man with his fists and the spectators expected a swift blow from the shoulder. It came only from the lips. Barrymore saw the man's condition and with a light laugh responded surely not if you say so.
50. In London but a few years ago no man ever went into the City with other than a top-hat or topper as they say there.

Exercise 28. Punctuation of Dialogue

Punctuate and paragraph the following passages of dialogue:

1. I thought it better to come myself said Mr Pickwick addressing Mr Winkle as Sam disencumbered him of his greatcoat and travelling shawl to ascertain before I gave my consent to Sam's employment in this matter that you are quite in earnest and serious with respect to this young lady. Serious from my heart from my soul returned Mr Winkle with great energy Remember said Mr Pickwick with beaming eyes we met her at our excellent and hospitable friend's Winkle. It would be an ill return to tamper lightly and without due consideration with this young lady's affections Ill not allow that sir Ill not allow it I have no such intention indeed exclaimed Mr Winkle warmly I have considered the matter well for a long time and I feel that my happiness is bound up in her. That's wot we call tying it up in a small parcel sir interposed Mr Weller with an agreeable smile.—Charles Dickens
2. It looks a nice warm exercise that doesn't it he inquired of Wardle when that gentleman was thoroughly out of breath by reason of the indefatigable manner in which he had converted his legs into a pair of compasses and drawn complicated patterns on the ice ah it does indeed replied Wardle do you slide I used to do so on the gutters when I was a boy replied Mr Pickwick try it now said Wardle oh do please Mr Pickwick cried all the ladies I should be very happy to afford you any amusement replied Mr Pickwick but I haven't done such a thing these thirty years pooh pooh nonsense said Wardle dragging off his skates with the impetuosity which characterized all his proceedings here Ill keep you company come along and away went the good tempered old fellow down the slide with a rapidity which came very close upon Mr Weller and beat the fat boy all to nothing.—Charles Dickens

CHAPTER VI

THE UNIFIED SENTENCE

THE problem of putting ideas into words and combining these words into a sentence may be compared to the task of a paleontologist who has dug up the bones of some prehistoric animal. As he studies each bone carefully, his knowledge of anatomy enables him to classify it as a vertebra, a rib, a part of the leg, or a fragment of skull. Having determined the function of each one, he is enabled to reconstruct the skeleton. If he is also an artist, he may paint a lifelike representation of the animal. From a pile of bones he has reconstructed and vitalized an idea.

What a knowledge of anatomy is to the paleontologist, a knowledge of grammar is to the average writer. For although some fortunate few seem to write well almost by intuition, the majority have no such instinctive feeling for sentence structure. They must consciously learn to write. They must study their "anatomy." By learning the functions of the materials with which they are to work—words, phrases, and clauses—they can learn how these, like bones, can be articulated and how, from out of a collection of words, they may create sentences and paragraphs which crystallize and communicate ideas and impressions.

Our study of grammar and sentence analysis has given us a knowledge of our materials. How these materials may be used is the object of our present study. We turn now to the sentence, the smallest unit in which we may study words, phrases, and clauses at work, and see them in relation to one another. We shall study three aspects of the sentence: unity, logic, and effectiveness.

A. THE THEORY OF SENTENCE UNITY

It is commonly said that a sentence must have unity. This conception might presuppose a rule dictating that a sentence should contain only one idea. Such a literal interpretation would, of course, be nonsensical, for if we were to follow it we should be compelled to write, "I see the cat. The cat is sitting on the porch"; whereas in fact we say, "I see the cat sitting on the porch."

What, then, is meant by "unity"? Rather than lay down at the outset a dogmatic definition, let us try to build up a conception by observing some well-written sentences:

> Jesus wept.—St. John

> And in like manner, what is called seeing the world, entering into active life, going into society, travelling, gaining acquaintance with the various classes of the community, coming into contact with the principles and modes of thought of various parties, interests, and races, their views, aims, habits and manners, their religious creeds and forms of worship—gaining experience how various yet how alike men are, how low-minded, how bad, how opposed, yet how confident in their opinions; all this exerts a perceptible influence upon the mind, which it is impossible to mistake, be it good or be it bad, and is popularly called its enlargement.[1]—John Henry Newman

Both of these sentences, coming from the pens of careful writers, can be said to have unity, and any definition of unity that we may frame must admit a sentence of a hundred words or more as well as one of only two. The unity of a sentence, we can see at once, is not determined by its length.

Cardinal Newman's long sentence (composed, let us remember, during the last century, when the long sentence was much more in vogue than it is today) aims at only one central idea—defining what the author means by enlargement of the mind; he enumerates in detail the experiences which constitute such an enlargement, but each of these details, we feel, points inevitably, as the sentence proceeds, toward a single definite idea, which the author sums up for us in the final word—"enlargement." St. John's two words, on the other hand, convey another type of impression which is no less vivid because the author has left the reader to infer the details for himself. Both sentences, then, have this in common—that they convey a single impression, one by the accumulation of related details and the other by a statement of a single fact.

The problem of unity, as represented in the average sentence, does not have to deal with such extreme cases. Let us make up an example to represent a typical problem. As we have seen, no practical rule is going to compel us to frame infantile sentences like "I saw a cat. The cat was sitting on the porch. The porch was Mrs. Jones's." We write, "I saw a cat sitting on Mrs. Jones's porch," combining in one sentence three ideas. Not even a pedant would criticize our sentence for lack of unity.

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[1] "Liberal Knowledge," from *On the Scope and Nature of University Education.*

Now, for the sake of experiment, let us amplify our thought, to see how far it can stretch: "When I was out walking this afternoon, I saw a cat sitting on Mrs. Jones's porch." We have added an idea; we have told *when* we saw the cat. The added information sharpens rather than blurs the original impression.

Let us again expand the sentence: "When I was calling this afternoon, I saw a cat sitting on Mrs. Jones's porch, and then I went down the street to do some shopping." We are conscious at once that the sentence is overloaded; the original impression has been lost by the addition of an idea which seems only remotely connected with seeing the cat on the porch. We have certainly crossed the border line which limits one idea.

If, however, we had written, "When I was out calling this afternoon, I saw a cat sitting on Mrs. Jones's porch and stopped to pat it," the new idea which we added would not seem unrelated. Like certain chemical elements the concepts of *seeing the cat* and *patting it* will combine, whereas *seeing the cat* and *going down the street to do some shopping* will not.

Let us try one final experiment. Suppose we were to write: "When I was out calling this afternoon, I saw a cat sitting on Mrs. Jones's porch, and Mrs. Jones asked me in to tea." This strikes us at once as containing two unrelated ideas. What is the connection, we ask ourselves, between seeing the cat and being asked in to tea?

Let us suppose, however, that there was a connection between the two ideas but that we failed to make the relationship clear. We might have had an experience which we did not fully describe. Attempting to relate our ideas more closely to one another, we write, "When, during my afternoon calling, I stopped at Mrs. Jones's porch to pat her cat, she came out and asked me in to tea." The mystery of the invitation has now been solved: we stopped to pat the cat; while we stood there, Mrs. Jones came out and issued her invitation. Now that the missing thought-link has been supplied, the ideas coalesce to form one larger but still unified idea.

Our illustrations have demonstrated that unity is a relative matter, dependent not upon the length of the sentence or necessarily upon the number of ideas which the sentence contains, but rather upon the question of whether these ideas will combine to form a unified impression.

The theoretical definition of a unified sentence must, therefore, be expanded. Instead of stating dogmatically that a sentence must contain only one idea, let us rather say:

A sentence is unified if it contains one idea, or a group of closely related ideas that unite to form a single definite impression.

B. SUPERORDINATION, SUBORDINATION, AND COÖRDINATION

Ideas, like the bones of a skeleton, are not all of equal importance. The paleontologist, reconstructing his prehistoric animal, would consider each vertebra essential. If, however, he should fail to unearth one of the ribs, he would consider the loss inconvenient but not fatal. So, too, some ideas can be dropped from a sentence without seriously impairing the thought or the impression which it creates; others are indispensable.

Our problem, after we have discarded the ideas which would mar the unity of our sentence, is to sort out the remainder according to their importance.

We are apt to ignore, or at least to undervalue, the service which a skillful writer performs when he appraises his ideas, sorts them out, and assigns to each of them a grammatical function befitting its importance. Instead of loosing his thoughts upon us in a disorderly mob, he has marshaled them like an army on dress parade, every officer and private at his proper post. The main thought of the sentence stands out clearly, while the minor ideas unobtrusively perform their functions of contributing to the general impression created by the sentence. Thus, in a very real sense the writer has done a large share of the thinking for us.

If we had not performed some such service for the reader, our previous illustrative sentence might have read like this: "I was out calling this afternoon. I saw a cat. It was sitting on Mrs. Jones's porch. I stopped to pat it. Mrs. Jones asked me in to tea." Or, if we had vaguely sensed the connection between the ideas but had not stopped to establish that connection, we might have written: "I was out calling this afternoon, *and* I saw a cat, *and* it was sitting on Mrs. Jones's porch, *and* I stopped to pat it, *and* Mrs. Jones asked me in to tea."

We have seen that in a unified sentence the important ideas should stand out, like the officers of a regiment on parade, while the less important details should take their place in the ranks. In writing, how may we denote these relative values? It is here that a knowledge of grammar comes to our aid, for in classifying ideas we shall resort to grammatical terminology.

Three grammatical terms conveniently fit the analogy we have drawn between ideas and soldiers. Our most important ideas we may term *superordinate* (from the Latin *super,* over + *ordo,* rank); the less important ideas are *subordinate* (from the Latin *sub,* under + *ordo,* rank); ideas which are of equal importance are said to be *coördinate* (from the Latin *co-,* equal + *ordo,* rank).

The main idea, or ideas, of a sentence, being superordinate, are usually placed in principal clauses; minor ideas are assigned to subordinate constructions; and ideas of equal rank—whether superordinate or subordinate—which are of equal importance and perform the same functions, are placed in parallel, or coördinate constructions.

As a result of our study of grammar and sentence analysis we are already familiar with the terms which designate the various classes of superordinate and subordinate constructions. As an aid to our further study these constructions can be conveniently classified. The following table lists the means of expressing superordinate ideas and subordinate ideas:

1. **Superordinate constructions (principal clauses):**
    a. Principal clauses connected by coördinating conjunctions: *and, but, for, or, nor, neither*[2]
    b. Principal clauses separated by a semicolon
    c. Principal clauses connected by conjunctive adverbs, which are preceded by a semicolon: *accordingly, again, also, besides, consequently, finally, further, furthermore, hence, however, indeed, likewise, moreover, nevertheless, notwithstanding, so*[2] (therefore), *still, then,*[2] *therefore, thereupon, thus, wherefore, yet*[2]

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[2] For *so, then, yet,* see p. 142, n. 3.

d. Principal clauses connected by correlatives: *either . . . or, neither . . . nor, both . . . and, not only . . . but also, on the one hand . . . on the other hand*

2. **Subordinate constructions:**
    - *a.* Clauses
        - (1) Adverbial clauses introduced by the following subordinating words and phrases:
            - *Cause:* as,[3] because, inasmuch as, since
            - *Comparison:* as, as if, as though, than
            - *Concession:* although, as if, even though, however much, no matter what, though, whatever, whichever, while [4]
            - *Condition:* if, in case that, on condition that, provided, provided that, unless
            - *Contrast:* whereas, while
            - *Degree:* as, as much as, than
            - *Manner:* as, as if, how, just as
            - *Place:* whence, where, wherever, whither
            - *Purpose:* in order that, lest, so that, that
            - *Result:* so that, that
            - *Time:* after, as, as soon as, before, since, till, until, when, while
        - (2) Adjectival clauses (chiefly relative clauses)
    - *b.* Phrases
        - (1) Prepositional phrases
        - (2) Gerund phrases
        - (3) Participial phrases
        - (4) Infinitive phrases
    - *c.* The nominative absolute construction
    - *d.* Words (A subordinate idea can often be reduced to a single word instead of to a clause or phrase.)

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[3] *As* throughout this list may express:
(1) *Cause* (*i.e.,* since)—As I was tired, I lay down.
(2) *Comparison* (*i.e.,* just as)—He did as he was told.
(3) *Degree* (*i.e.,* to the extent that)—Sick as I am, I will do it.
(4) *Manner* (*i.e.,* in the same manner as)—I did it as you told me.
(5) *Time* (*i.e.,* at the same time as)—As I came in, I took off my hat.

[4] *While* throughout this list may express:
(1) *Concession* (*i.e.,* although)—While I can sing, I cannot read music.
(2) *Contrast* (*i.e.,* whereas)—He is short, while she is tall.
(3) *Time* (*i.e.,* during the time that, or when)—While (during the time that) I was gone, he arrived.

C. THE PRINCIPLE OF UNITY IN OPERATION

Having seen the grammatical constructions which can be used to embody ideas of varying importance, let us now see how the principle of unity can aid us in combining ideas into a sentence. For purposes of illustration we shall take a sentence which combines a number of related thoughts in a leisurely style, fitted to the mood of the author:

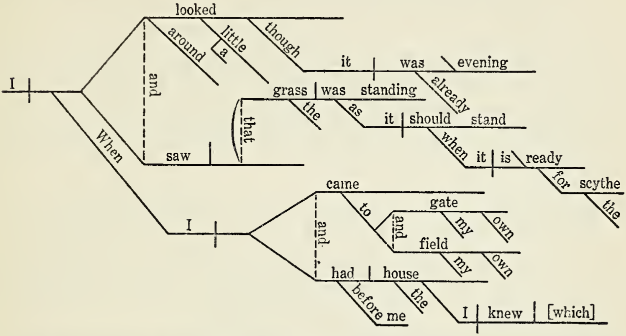
> When I came to my own gate and my own field, and had before me the house I knew, I looked around a little (though it was already evening), and saw that the grass was standing as it should stand when it is ready for the scythe.—Hilaire Belloc

This sentence can be broken down into ten separate ideas: (a) I came to my own gate. (b) I came to my own field. (c) I saw a house. (d) The house was before me. (e) I knew the house. (f) I looked around a little. (g) It was already evening. (h) I saw the grass standing. (i) It stood in a certain way. (j) It is ready for the scythe when it stands thus.

We have seen that Belloc combined these ideas into one single sentence. Now let us see how he did it. In the arrangement below each separate idea is listed on the left; the finished sentence appears on the right. The center column indicates how the author employed superordination, subordination, and coördination to bring out in relief what he considered important and to shade the details which he felt to be of lesser value.

(a) I came to my own gate.	subord. clause	*When* I came to my own gate
(b) I came to my own field.	noun phrase	*and* my own field
(c) I saw a house.	subord. clause (cont'd)	*and* had
(d) The house was before me.	prep. phrase	*before me* the house
(e) I knew the house.	relative clause	[*which*] I knew
(f) I looked around a little.	principal clause	I looked around a little
(g) It was already evening.	subord. clause	(*though* it was already evening)
(h) I saw the grass standing.	coördinate clause + noun clause	*and* I saw that the grass was standing
(i) It stood in a certain way.	subord. clause	*as* it should stand
(j) It is ready for the scythe when it stands thus.	subord. clause	*when* it is ready for the scythe.

From ten ideas Belloc has constructed a complex sentence consisting of a simple subject (*I*), a principal clause containing two verbs (*looked* and *saw*), and six subordinate clauses (including a noun clause). We can better visualize the methods of subordination by studying the following diagram:


looked
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came
to
gate
my
own
and
field
my
own
I
had
house
before
me
the
I
knew
[which]

Let us now look at a sentence from a student theme. Each separate idea has been lettered, as in the previous analysis. The connectives have been italicized.

(a) In high school the general course included Oral English as an elective, (b) *and* besides I felt *as though* I should know a little more about the subject, (c) *as* I was rather nervous (d) *and* sometimes I would hesitate *when* speaking; (e) *so* one of my teachers advised me to take the course, (f) *and so* I did.

Upon reading the sentence we are at once impressed by the excessive superordination. To relate the six ideas the writer used *four* principal clauses and four subordinate clauses. Of the seven connectives three are *and's* and two are *so's.* Now *and* is one of the coördinating conjunctions (*and, but, for, or, nor,* and *neither*), which join sentence elements with other elements of the same grammatical rank—that is, principal clauses with principal clauses, nouns with nouns, adverbs with adverbs, etc. When, therefore, two words or groups of words are joined by one of these coördinating conjunctions, the implication is that they are not only of the same grammatical rank but of the same thought value. This equivalence might be represented thus:

(a) In high school the general course included Oral English as an elective	AND	(b) besides I felt as though I should know a little more about the subject
(c) as I was rather nervous	AND	(d) [as] sometimes I would hesitate when speaking
(e) so one of my English teachers advised me to take the course	AND	(f) so I did

Before we can analyze the sentence further, we must discover whether the sentence contains a principal idea to which the other ideas may be subordinated. The main point of the student's sentence seems to have been *I took Oral English in high school.* Let us now weigh the relative values of the ideas and study the relationships among them.

(a) *In high school the general course included Oral English as an elective* explains how the student was able to take the course.

(c) *I was rather nervous* and (d) *sometimes I would hesitate when speaking* are not of equal importance, since (c) is only an instance, tending to prove that (d) was true.

(b) *besides I felt as though I should know a little more about the subject* is important, as it is the reason for (f) *I did* [elect Oral English].

(e) *one of my teachers advised me to take the course* is a reason for (f), and is therefore of lesser value than (f), which, as we have seen, is the principal idea of the sentence.

Now let us try to arrange these ideas to show their relationships. (We shall continue to use the same letters.)

(f) *I took Oral English in high school—*
  (a) because the general course included Oral English as an elective
  (b) because I felt that I should know a little more about the subject
  (d) because I hesitated in my speech, a habit caused by (c) nervousness
  (e) because one of my teachers advised me to take the course

These reasons, however, are not of equal importance; some of them influenced the student more than others. Let us try to assign them a grammatical value that is somewhat proportionate to their logical value:

(b) Because I felt that I should know a little more about the subject and because I was afflicted with a (c) nervous (d) hesitation in my speech, I elected, (e) upon the advice of one of my high school teachers, (f) a course in Oral English, (a) an elective in the general course.

The sentence, thus written, is unwieldy, but it serves to illustrate several means by which ideas may be sorted out and assigned functions commensurate with their relative importance.

Let us see what we have done. The original sentence, as we have seen, contained six thoughts, four of which were put into main clauses and two into subordinate clauses introduced by *as*. In the revised sentence, the principal thought is put into a main clause; the other subordinate ideas have been put into subordinate constructions of varying types. The following arrangement will enable us to compare the original with the revised sentence:

Original Sentence	*Revised Sentence*
(a) In high school the general course included Oral English as an elective (*principal clause* + *subordinate clause*)	(a) an elective in the general course (*appositive*)
(b) and besides I felt as though I should know a little more about the subject (*principal clause*)	(b) because I felt that I should know a little more about the subject (*subordinate clause, denoting cause* + *noun clause*)
(c) as I was rather nervous (*subordinate clause*)	(c) nervous (*adjective*)
(d) and sometimes I would hesitate when speaking (*subordinate clause,* continuation of [c]) + *subordinate clause*	(d) because I was afflicted with a nervous hesitation in my speech (*subordinate clause,* denoting cause, parallel to [b])
(e) so one of my teachers advised me to take the course (*principal clause*)	(e) upon the advice of one of my high school teachers (*phrase*)
(f) and so I did. (*principal clause*)	(f) I elected a course in Oral English. (*principal clause*)

D. SUMMARY

To facilitate quick reference we may summarize and classify the chief faults which cause sentences to lack unity:

1. Superordination

a. Excessive superordination: loose coördination of major and minor ideas in the form of principal clauses. The most loosely employed connectives are *and, but,* and *so* (*i.e.,* therefore). The remedy is either to break up the sentence or to subordinate the minor ideas.

Example: Loose: Sol, the chief character in the play, receives a job paying fifty dollars a month; *so* Sarah feels that they can get married; *but* Sol forgets about her, *and* we wonder whether he has not treated her as he has treated all the others. (four principal clauses)

Improved: After Sol, the chief character in the play, receives a job paying fifty dollars a month, Sarah feels that they can get married. But *when* Sol forgets about her, we wonder whether he has not treated her as he has treated all the others. (two sentences, two subordinate clauses)

b. Misleading superordination: use of the wrong coördinating conjunction.

Example: Inaccurate: He is very old *and* he has young ideas.
Clear: He is very old, *but* he has young ideas.

2. Subordination

a. Overlapping subordination: one subordinate clause depending upon another.

Example: Overlapping clauses: He was ambitious to achieve the wealth *which* would bring him the power *which* riches confer.

Improved: He was ambitious to achieve wealth, which would bring him the power conferred by riches.

b. Misleading subordination: use of the wrong subordinating conjunction.

Examples: Ambiguous: While he was here I did not see him. (Does *while* mean *although* or *when*?)

Ambiguous: I did not see him *as* I was going out. (Does *as* mean *since* or *at the same time as*?)

c. False subordination: putting a major idea in a subordinate clause.

Example: Weak: I asked him to do it, *although* he kept putting it off.
More effective: I asked him to do it, *but* he kept putting it off.

3. Superordination, subordination, and coördination

a. Short choppy sentences which do not achieve a definite rhetorical effect: some of these sentences can be combined by the use of superordination, subordination, and coördination.

Example: Choppy: In the manufacture of poisonous gases private enterprises are competing with one another. They are vying for government contracts. They are producing a dangerous situation.

Improved: In the manufacture of poisonous gases private enterprises, *competing* with one another and *vying* for government contracts, are producing a dangerous situation.

b. Illogical omission of a necessary idea: omission of a major or minor idea necessary to the logical completeness of a sentence. The omitted idea may be superordinate or subordinate, or it may be coördinate with an idea already expressed in the sentence.

Examples: Omission of superordinate idea: The mercury fell below zero and the house was soon flooded.

Complete: When the mercury fell below zero, *the frozen pipes burst* and soon flooded the house.

Omission of subordinate idea: He was handicapped by his lack of training, but soon obtained a good position.

Complete: He was handicapped by his lack of training, but *through the aid of a friend* soon obtained a good position.

Omission of coördinate idea: By studying hard at college he was able to accept the company's offer to go to South America the following year.

Complete: By studying hard at college and *by thus completing his course in three years* he was able to accept the company's offer to go to South America the following year.

Exercise 29. Unity

Rewrite the following, observing especially the violations of unity. Bring related ideas into one unified sentence, combining separate parts when necessary; or, when advisable, break up the given sentence into two or more sentences.

1. Racine, a French dramatist of the 17th century, was a very energetic man and wrote many plays, mostly successful, although a few were not, and he believed that laughter is spontaneous if it is laughter at all, like tears, in which I agree with him.
2. I have been reading all my life. The field has been mostly that of English fiction. I have not yet learned to enjoy non-fiction.
3. If you plan to study early in the morning, you must remember that you will be using your eyes, and that reading is just as hard on the eyes as is sewing or drawing or following music, and that it is important before using your eyes after sleep to eat something, even though no more than a cracker, for the eyes are dependent for their strength on the stomach, just as the rest of our organs are.

4. I took four years of Latin. It was in high school. I studied hard. Latin has been a great help to me in English.
5. Young Dana received his orders to go aboard the Brig *Pilgrim,* which was a very small boat indeed for such a dangerous voyage as the one around Cape Horn, and which he found lying in the harbor at Boston.
6. The bottom of the kettle used to be scoured by housewives. We know now that it should be black. A bright kettle-bottom resists heat. Heat is therefore wasted.
7. Labor costs amount to about eighty percent of the cost of production in some industries, and the employees therefore suffer severely because of the manufacturers' attempts to cut down operating expenses.
8. A military hero can become famous only after the losing of many lives. A statue to a military hero is really a monument to thousands of widows and orphans. In my opinion it is not a thing to be proud of that we have so many fine statues to our military heroes.
9. A radiator should always be set back into the wall, as the top of a radiator gets very dirty. The rising heat carries dirt back up into the air. An exposed radiator is not sanitary.
10. Sometimes, in a thoughtful mood, a man becomes completely detached from himself, and the inspiration of harmonious nature calms his mind, and he "sees into the heart of things," because every one is a poet sometimes.
11. At drill we practised many maneuvers. I was stationed one time in a cornfield. I was acting as outpost.
12. He was a very ambitious person who wanted to get ahead in the world, and he did, but what good did it do, for he was finally killed in the end by the girl whom he loved and cared a great deal about.
13. Then, of course, the value of reading stimulating books and magazines cannot be overlooked, because the reading of these books and magazines gives the reader new ideas, and these ideas are enlarged upon by discussion with other people, because two people who have read the same book or magazine article may get different ideas from the same book.
14. Dreiser had several jobs as a reporter or writer, and when he wrote *Sister Carrie* as an outlet for his beliefs and for satisfaction, since his other works did not satisfy him, he found that the realism in it prevented it from being offered to the public.
15. Blank verse consists of iambic pentameter metre. It has no rhyme. It is used in Shakespeare's plays. It was the most popular form of verse among the Elizabethan dramatists.
16. I think I improved my writing by reading Walter Pater's essays, for they are very charmingly written, and are highly critical, and I enjoyed especially the one in which he says that our senses should be awakened, for although awakened senses may not help us to judge life, they will help us to enjoy it.
17. Ski shoes are comfortable. The toes are square. Shoe toes should all be square. The heels are low, if there are any. I wish all shoes were made after the same fashion.

18. Algiers is as much French as Egyptian, and is an important commercial city, whose chief commodity seems to be rugs, since the markets are full of them and most of the people who land at Algiers visit the rug factories.
19. His wife loved beautiful things and admitted it, but somehow business men don't like to admit that they care for either beauty or sentiment, but they do, and they do have brains and quick brains at that.
20. Most women spend too much time in the kitchen. They forget how to be interesting. A kitchen is very seldom a charming place. It can be depressing.
21. Chairs used to be made like square boxes, with solid wooden backs and sides to them, and when women began to wear hoops in their skirts, chairs were changed to accommodate the skirts and were made without sides thereafter, which, combined with the new fashion for walnut wood, made all the furniture tend to grow lighter.
22. A tree follows the laws of nature. Light is a force strong enough to draw grown trees toward it. Light will draw forth almost all things that are growing.
23. This class of people just lives from day to day, and they may be enjoying themselves to a certain extent, but I think it would be a much better world for all of us if everyone who had a brain would take time to do some real constructive thinking.
24. The seventh and eighth grades are the most important part of my English background. For in these grades began the foundation of my whole English training.
25. An insect is not afraid of gravity, for it is so small that gravity exerts little force on it, and yet, small as it is, it kills many of our enemies, and is a friend as well as a foe to us.
26. A man coming out of a bath should feel very much refreshed, and carries on his body a film of water of about one fiftieth of an inch in thickness, and weighing about a pound.
27. The Russian farmers breed bees. Bees carry pollen throughout vast fields. Crops could never grow in Russia without multitudes of bees.
28. The whole cadet corps goes to Winchester every spring. They travel in buses.
29. At the beginning of the depression the problem of price was encountered, and the midget radio sets solved this problem. The sales on larger sets decreased, however, but with the improvements and refinements, sales gradually increased.
30. The old-school biographers would defend the cherry tree story. They consider honesty to be an important quality in a President. The story exhibits Washington's basic quality of honesty.

CHAPTER VII

THE LOGICAL SENTENCE

A. LOGIC AND WRITING

OUR study of grammar has taught us the means of indicating relations between words and has given us a conception of their functions in the sentence. But in writing we are not interested alone in words or their functions. Our objective is the communication of ideas and impressions to the reader, and we value words only as a medium of expressing what we feel and think.

Our feelings and thoughts must be clear in our own minds before we can hope to convey them to our reader. No amount of mechanical proficiency or knowledge of the rules of grammar can compensate for an inability or unwillingness to think. We might as reasonably expect a clear stream to flow from a muddy lake.

But unfortunately not all persons who can think well can express themselves clearly. Their deficiencies, however, are usually superficial, arising from a lack of familiarity with a few of the principles which govern clear and logical expression. These principles will be briefly stated in this chapter.

The fortunate possessor of a logical mind is not the only type of person who will benefit from a study of these principles. Those who do not think as clearly as they should will find that their mental processes will be sharpened by studying how to express ideas clearly. In attempting to say what they mean they will be helped to mean what they say.

B. ILLOGICAL STATEMENTS

It would be neither possible nor profitable to classify the mistakes illustrated in the following sentences. They arise from careless or illogical thinking; the way to avoid them is to adopt two preventive measures: we should know exactly what we mean, and say it.

Examples: Illogical: His father was a doctor, a profession which set John apart from the other village boys. (A doctor is not a profession.)

Logical: Because his father was a doctor, John was set apart from the other village boys.

Illogical: We were always pressed for time, and in this way we used a telegraphic style of writing. (The second clause logically should express *result;* the phrase *in this way,* however, denotes manner.)

Logical: Because we were always pressed for time, we used a telegraphic style of writing.

Illogical: The technique of a poet is comparable to a musician. (A technique cannot be compared to a musician.)

Logical: The technique of a poet is comparable to that of a musician.

Illogical: He visited the north of England, returned to London, was taken with pneumonia, and had many other terrifying experiences. (Visiting the north of England and returning to London were not necessarily terrifying experiences.)

Logical: After visiting the north of England and returning to London, he was taken with pneumonia and had many other terrifying experiences.

Illogical: Shakespeare's plays are better than any other author I have read. (A play cannot be better than an author.)

Logical: Shakespeare's plays are better than those of any other author I have read.

Exercise 30. The Logical Sentence

Point out the illogical thinking in the following sentences. Then rewrite the sentences, making them logical.

1. My second year of study led me into literature, which I found interesting, merely because of its chances of varied reading.
2. Broadway stars use mascara to give them the alluring eyes that are necessary to be beautiful.
3. All the facts of Wordsworth's life would be of little value to you, compared with what you would get by comprehending all that he wrote.
4. What often wears out in a fountain pen is that it has an automatic filler.
5. A sense of humor is one way to meet many of life's problems.
6. The different uses of the noun, adjective, verb, and adverb were not easy, but profitable.
7. The purpose of earning a living is called a professional school, and the desire of learning for its own sake would be called the cultural college.
8. Football consists of eleven men on a side.

9. Such an education covered a large surface, but had little depth. It had great volume, but little quality. In this manner one obtained a superficial knowledge of many things but a true knowledge of nothing.
10. His clothes are neater than any man I have ever met.
11. An important position in an advertising office is the slogan-writer.
12. What he said was one reason I did not like him.
13. Unlike other nations, the Chinese have been really notable in all the arts, but they have been the most distinguished in the art of painting.
14. The second reason for a student's attending college is classed as cultural.
15. Being a tuberculosis specialist is the most profitable field that a young medical student can enter.
16. A recent estimate of the amount of money spent by Americans in foreign lotteries is over $160,000,000 a year.
17. If an individual should rebel against the conventions of society, his punishment is as effective, if not as bloody, as the law of the jungle.
18. We try to get the employees' checks to them a day or two before the less fortunate government workers.
19. This method adds speed to the action of the story and is a good type of story to read if one enjoys fast conversation and action.
20. In all the characters of the book the actors are the victims of themselves.
21. The verse form is in couplets.
22. The number of feet in a line is meter.
23. To see the mangled bodies, victims of cave-ins, brought to the surface of the mine is pitiable.
24. With the American mania for keeping clean, we forget soap, which may, it is true, scour us, but which can do tremendous damage to the texture of the skin.
25. The rival manufacturer then raises his price equal to his competitor.
26. When I went down the street, I stopped at the department store, the drug store, the Washington Monument, and many other interesting sights.
27. Nature alone holds the secret of beauty, and with a sufficient amount of sleep, and a dearth of hot water, she can teach it to us all.
28. Sitting at my desk was when I first thought of the idea.
29. If a man is not used to writing, it is hard to say what he means.
30. In *War and Peace,* Tolstoy shows that the plan for a battle always turned into a different and unpremeditated attack, demonstrating that there is no such thing as military genius.

C. LOGICAL ARRANGEMENT OF SENTENCE ELEMENTS

We have seen that the average sentence is composed of a group of related ideas which unite to form a single definite impression. We also know that these ideas are embodied in grammatical units of varying importance, ranging from principal clauses to phrases and words. In order to make clear the thought of a sentence, we must arrange and group these sentence elements in a logical way.

There are two general principles which can aid us in arranging sentence elements:

1. **Arrange ideas according to a logical plan.** In our study of the paragraph we learned many ways in which ideas can be arranged—from cause to effect, from effect to cause, from time to time, from place to place, etc. The sentence, which is really a miniature paragraph, deserves the same careful planning.

Let us consider the following sentence:

> (1) Neither of us could listen for very long at a time on our little radio, (2) until my brother discovered that we could take the headpiece apart, (3) as it was necessary to take turns with the receivers.

As the sentence is written, (3) is the *reason* for (1); the action of (2), in point of *time,* follows both (3) and (1). The sentence would have been much clearer if the ideas had been arranged in the following order: first, (3) the reason for the situation; second, (1) the situation; and third, (2) the remedy for the situation. The sentence would then read:

> (3) As it was necessary to take turns with the receivers, (1) neither of us could listen for very long at a time on our little radio (2) until my brother discovered that we could take the headpiece apart.

2. **Group related elements together.** Subordinate constructions, which usually modify, should be placed as close as possible to the elements which they modify.

A corollary rule is that a modifier of one element should not be ambiguously placed between two elements to which it might equally apply. This construction is sometimes called the "squinting modifier." It might more properly be termed a "wall-eyed modifier," since it hopefully tries to look in two directions at once.

One of the earmarks of the careless writer is that he frequently misplaces prepositional phrases and relative clauses. The result is an awkward or ambiguous sentence.

A surprising number of these errors may be cured by lifting the element bodily and placing it in another part of the sentence where it logically belongs. This remedy frequently can be applied to relative clauses, which should be placed, if possible, immediately following the antecedent of the relative pronoun.

Examples: Ambiguously placed prepositional phrase: He read Kipling, Dickens, and Stevenson after his marriage.

Clear: After his marriage he read Kipling, Dickens, and Stevenson.

Awkwardly placed prepositional phrase: A very good illustration occurred in my office last week of a man's taking advantage of his position.

Improved: There occurred in my office last week a good illustration of a man's taking advantage of his position.

Awkwardly placed subordinate clause: He was very much surprised to see her sitting in the chair when he came to the door.

Improved: When he came to the door, he was very much surprised to see her sitting in the chair.

Ambiguously placed relative clause: If they could develop techniques for presenting their views that were forceful but entertaining, they would succeed.

Clear: If, in presenting their views, they could adopt techniques that were forceful or entertaining, they would succeed.

Awkwardly placed relative clause: The solution was obvious, which had hitherto escaped him.

Improved: The solution, which had hitherto escaped him, was obvious.

Squinting modifier: The man who applies himself most of the time is successful.

Clear: The man who applies himself is successful most of the time.

Also clear: Most of the time the man who applies himself is successful.

Exercise 31. Logical Arrangement of Sentence Elements

Point out the misplaced elements. Then rewrite the sentences, placing together related parts.

1. Originally, Paisley shawls were but imitations of valuable Indian Cashmeres which Colonel Paisley manufactured in Scotland and to which he gave his name.
2. Telling a lie in nine cases out of ten is not profitable.
3. No one can prevent moths from returning after a few months with a guarantee.
4. Sinclair Lewis sometimes tries to destroy in American life what he dislikes by satire.
5. In order to grow capable of functioning, in many babies, the stomach has actually to function.

6. He finally came back to the town in an automobile, where he had been born.
7. The essay will undoubtedly hold anyone who is interested in football in suspense.
8. The author compared these facts with those handed down to us in an interesting manner.
9. He spent much of his time while traveling conversing with common people.
10. Most of the poem is presented before any hint that the story might not turn out well is given.
11. It does, however, differ from prose in many respects very distinctly.
12. She regards every boy she sees as fair game.
13. One particular adventure along a very high cliff, similar to an adventure that I had experienced, to me, was one of the most interesting sections of the book.
14. I was really proud of what I had done for more than one reason.
15. The script-writer must compose a short speech on a product that will be so powerful that the public will be persuaded to buy it.
16. No electric appliance should ever be bought by anyone who is not crazy to be put under water.
17. It is hard to teach letters by using blocks to children, since they will be upside down half of the time and seldom in their true position.
18. Jack and Algernon appear to be very different from their outward appearances, but they are very similar underneath.
19. I succeeded in forgetting the little I had learned in a few weeks.
20. A hobby is valuable in the keen interest and curiosity it arouses in the subjects concerned.
21. Why not recommend consultation with an architect through the medium of the radio?
22. Such a person has thus accepted a knowledge of a little bit of everything as true education.
23. We hear of cases of the lack of food and clothing every day.
24. Are there not thousands who listen to the football game on the radio instead of attending it for one of these reasons?
25. I told him not to come when I saw him.
26. Patients are found in these charitable resorts all over the world which have the necessary financial support.
27. Soap powders which claim to whiten clothes usually contain a strong grease resolvent, causing fading among other things, which is dangerous.
28. The criminal is removed either permanently or temporarily from active competition through judicial procedure.
29. I had disliked her from the beginning, not because of her personal charm, but because of her seniority, for one thing (she is older than I am), and her disposition to give orders to everyone including myself, for another. Moreover, her keen curiosity added to my difficulties also.
30. It is a pleasure to try out every new device that is invented without digging into my pocket to pay for it.

D. PARALLELISM

Parallelism is a principle which leads a writer to put logically parallel thoughts in *grammatically* parallel constructions.

Let us look at a few examples:

(w) A man *who tells nothing,* or *who tells all,* will equally have nothing told him.—Lord Chesterfield

(x) *To admire, to love, to regret,* is to live.—Ambroise Thomas

(y) *How they sang, how they laughed and grinned; how they scraped, bowed, and complimented you and each other,* those negroes of the cities of the southern parts of the then United States!—W. M. Thackeray

(z) There is *only one wish realizable on earth; only one thing that can be perfectly attained:* Death.—R. L. Stevenson

We notice at once two characteristics of parallelism: first, similar or contrasted ideas are presented in similar grammatical constructions; second, these constructions call attention to themselves by the similarity of the words which introduce them—in (w) *who,* in (x) *to,* in (y) *how,* and in (z) *only one.* These words or phrases we may call "signals." This second characteristic does not mark every case of parallelism; the first, however, invariably does.

Parallelism is effective because it enables us to point out to the reader the similarity or contrast between thoughts: we give identical—or nearly identical—grammatical form to corresponding or antithetical ideas.

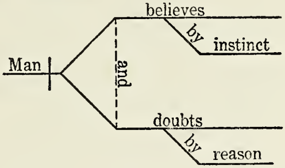
In speaking of parallelism we have several times mentioned the word *grammatical.* If we are to have parallel grammatical form, it follows that we shall be aided by a knowledge of grammar: the parts of speech; the distinction between phrases and clauses, and between superordinate, coördinate, and subordinate clauses.

Parallelism varies greatly in its range. It may involve parallelism between individual words, or between groups of words—phrases may be made parallel with phrases, clauses with clauses, and even sentences with sentences. When the similarity of grammatical constructions becomes especially noticeable in a sentence, the term "balance" is often applied; we have balanced phrases, clauses, or sentences.

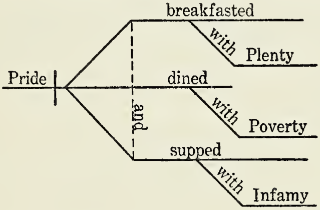
The excerpts quoted above might reasonably be called examples of balance. Where parallelism ends and balance begins is purely an academic question, which need not concern us here.

A few illustrations will help us better to grasp the principle of parallelism. In each of the following examples we shall find, first, a sentence which does not contain parallelism; next, a similar sentence which does contain parallelism; and, finally, a diagram of the latter sentence in its parallel form.

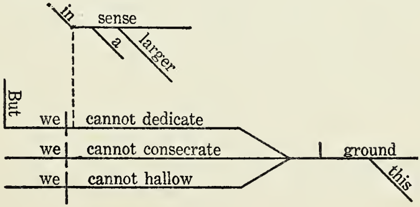
No parallelism: Man believes instinctively and doubts by reason.
Parallelism: Man believes *by instinct* and doubts *by reason.*—Théodore Jouffroy (parallel predicates)


believes
by
instinct
Man
and
doubts
by
reason

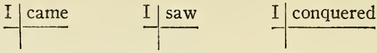
No parallelism: Pride had breakfast with Plenty, dined with Poverty, but Infamy had him to supper.
Parallelism: Pride *breakfasted with Plenty, dined with Poverty,* and *supped with Infamy.*—Benjamin Franklin (parallel predicates)


breakfasted
with
Plenty
Pride
dined
with
Poverty
and
supped
with
Infamy

No parallelism: But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate this ground; it is impossible, also, for us to consecrate or hallow it.
Parallelism: But in a larger sense, *we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow*—this ground.—Abraham Lincoln (parallel principal clauses)


in
sense
a
larger
But
we
cannot dedicate
we
cannot consecrate
we
cannot hallow
ground
this

No parallelism: After I had arrived, I proceeded to look about me. Then I conquered the enemy.
Parallelism: I came, I saw, I conquered.—JULIUS CAESAR



1. Signals for parallelism. Now we can visualize how the parallel lines in the diagrams graphically represent the parallel ideas. We see, too, the prevalence of those "signals" which so often serve to introduce parallelism. The repetition of these signals, when possible, before each parallel element is most useful to the reader; although he may not know formal grammar, he easily recognizes the presence of the signals and comes, instinctively though unconsciously, to rely upon them.

Several parts of speech are used as signals—prepositions, conjunctions, the infinitive sign *to,* and auxiliary verbs. In the following examples the signal (written in italics) should have been repeated in the place indicated by a caret, (∧).

Examples: Preposition omitted: I do not remember being taught anything *about* diagraming sentences and ∧ paragraph structure.

Conjunction omitted: The action of the play begins *when* Jack loses his cigarette case and ∧ his cousin Gwendolen finds it.

Infinitive sign TO *omitted:* Each of us is too ready *to* pick flaws in those about him and ∧ try to make them conform.

Auxiliary verb omitted: When these people read the letter, they *will* think less of the magazine and ∧ lower their estimation of the writer.

At this point we may note how frequently parallelism occurs with correlative conjunctions, such as *both . . . and, either . . . or*. These correlatives can balance any two sentence elements that are grammatically similar—that is, *they must balance a noun against a noun, a phrase against a phrase, a clause against a clause, etc.* Furthermore, when phrases or clauses are balanced against each other, they should be introduced, if possible, by the same signal.

Examples: Adjective vs. adjective: I am neither *tired* nor *hungry.*
Noun vs. noun: He was to me both *a guardian* and *a friend.*

Weak parallelism caused by dissimilar signals: He found himself both *in need of money* and *without means of transportation.*

Parallelism improved by repetition of same signal: He found himself both *without* money and *without* means of transportation.

2. False parallelism. False parallelism results when we put into *grammatically* parallel constructions ideas that are not *logically* parallel. The parallel structure misleads the reader into believing that the ideas are parallel. False parallelism is a form of rhetorical lie; it holds out to the reader a promise which it fails to keep. It manifests itself in several ways:

a. False parallelism signaled by **and** *and* **but,** *where there is no similarity or contrast between ideas.*

Example: He told me *that* he would come *and that* is the reason I am here. (The second *that,* following *and,* leads the reader to expect a second fact that he told me; actually the second *that* is not, like the first, a conjunction, but a pronoun.)

One of the commonest forms of this mistake is the *and* (or *but*) *which* construction. *And* (or *but*) *which* implies a preceding relative clause (*which . . . and* [or *but*] *which . . .*). If no relative clause has actually preceded, false parallelism occurs.

Examples: Wrong: A Bible, *old and dust-covered, and which* weighed over ten pounds, was on the table.

Wrong: He made a contract with *Winter, a manufacturer, but whom* he trusted implicitly.

Note that the *and* (or *but*) *which* construction may often be cured—as in both sentences above—by omitting the *and* or *but.*

b. False signals which imply parallelism when none is intended.

Example: The plan has gradually built up a program *for* expert vocational training of the disabled, and *for* this reason it is significant. (The two *for's,* though they are both prepositions, are not followed by objects that are logically parallel.)

c. False series. A series of three or more compared or contrasted ideas usually takes the following form: ____(A)____, ____(B)____, and (or) ____(C)____. Such a series implies that A, B, and C will be grammatically and logically parallel. Thus, in the phrase, *the red, white, and blue flag* the three words in the series are all adjectives, and they all modify *flag.*

The necessity for grammatical parallelism holds true whether the series is composed of words, phrases, or clauses: *all three* (or more) elements in the series must be of the same grammatical value—that is, they must be *all* nouns, *all* verbs, *all* clauses, etc. In the following examples at least one element in the series is not parallel with the other elements:

Examples: Wrong: I was *perspiring, exhausted,* and *my strength was ebbing.* (participle, participle, and *clause.*)

Right: I was perspiring and exhausted; my strength was ebbing.

Wrong: Michael is described as having *cheerful spirits, unusual strength, a keen mind, and being watchful and frugal.*

(In the sentence above the *and* implies a fourth element in the series (A), (B), (C), and (D); A (cheerful spirits), B (unusual strength), and C (a keen mind) are parallel objects of *having.* But D (*being watchful and frugal*) is not either a logical or grammatical object of *having;* it is a participial phrase.

Note also that the writer intended to state that Michael was described *as having . . . and as being.* In other words, the signal *as* was omitted before *being;* furthermore, an *and* should be inserted between B and C to indicate that the series is to contain only three elements.

Improved: Michael is described *as* having cheerful spirits, unusual strength, *and* a keen mind, and *as* being watchful and frugal.

Wrong: It felt wonderful to have my teammates patting me on the back, congratulating me, and hearing thousands of fans applaud me. (In this series, A and B (*patting* and *cheering*) are participles modifying *teammates.* C (*hearing*), although it is a participle, does not logically modify *teammates.* Logically it is parallel with *to have;* it should therefore be put in a *grammatically* parallel construction.)

Improved: It seemed wonderful *to have* my teammates patting me on the back *and* congratulating me and *to hear* thousands of fans applauding me.

d. False use of correlatives. As has been pointed out (p. 190), correlative conjunctions should introduce grammatically similar elements.

Two principles should be borne in mind:

(1) The grammatically similar elements must *immediately* fol-

low each correlative, in order that the parallelism may be brought out.

(2) The grammatically similar elements must also be logically parallel.

Note the incorrect uses in the following sentences:

Examples: *Wrong:* I received *not only* A "B" GRADE, *but also* I GAINED a great deal from the course.

Improved: I *not only* RECEIVED a "B" grade *but also* GAINED a great deal from the course.

Wrong: He is *either* ILL-MANNERED *or else* HE IS IGNORANT.

Improved: He is *either* ILL-MANNERED *or* IGNORANT.

Wrong: He is *both* CHARMING *and* I AM SURE THAT YOU WILL LIKE him.

Improved: He is charming; I think that you will like him. (There is no parallelism of thought implied unless the writer intended to say, He is *both* CHARMING *and* LIKABLE.)

Exercise 32. Parallelism

Copy the following sentences, underlining the parallel elements:

1. He is stable in his temperament, steadfast in his affections, and capable of open-eyed endurance without flinching.—VIRGINIA WOOLF
2. Clearness, force, and even a certain degree of elegance, may be acquired; but the daily theme eye, like the eye for the sights of a rifle, may be discovered, developed, trained—but not acquired.—WALTER PRICHARD EATON
3. I am very fond of the company of ladies. I like their beauty, I like their delicacy, I like their vivacity, and I like their silence.—SAMUEL JOHNSON
4. No one can be perfectly free till all are free; no one can be perfectly moral till all are moral; no one can be perfectly happy till all are happy.—HERBERT SPENCER
5. The great business of life is to be, to do, to do without, and to depart. —JOHN, VISCOUNT MORLEY
6. A little neglect may breed mischief: for want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe the horse was lost; and for want of a horse the rider was lost.—BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
7. We hold these truths to be self-evident—that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.—THOMAS JEFFERSON
8. There is no mistake; there has been no mistake; and there shall be no mistake.—THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON
9. I wish our clever young poets would remember my homely definitions of prose and poetry; that is, prose—words in their best order; poetry—the best words in their best order.—SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

10. The conformation of his mind was such that whatever was little seemed to him great, and whatever was great seemed to him little. —Thomas Babington Macaulay
11. What we anticipate seldom occurs; what we least expect generally happens.—Benjamin Disraeli
12. In science, read, by preference, the newest works; in literature, the oldest. The classics are always modern.—Edward Bulwer Lytton
13. With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.—Abraham Lincoln
14. I firmly believe that if the whole *materia medica* could be sunk to the bottom of the sea, it would be all the better for mankind and all the worse for the fishes.—Oliver Wendell Holmes
15. We learn wisdom from failure much more than from success. We often discover what will do by finding out what will not do; and probably he who never made a mistake never made a discovery.—Samuel Smiles
16. These three [Thoreau, Emerson, and Whitman] walked out of the church, they walked out of the frigid intellectualism of contemporary unitarian culture, they walked out of the academic orthodoxy of Harvard college, they walked out of the political state, they walked out of the drawing-room society—they walked out into nature and the use of all their senses.—Stuart Pratt Sherman
17. And now that all this was over, now that Sebastopol had been, somehow or another, taken; now that peace was, somehow or another, made; now that the troubles of office might surely be expected to be at an end at last—here was Miss Nightingale breaking in upon the scene, with her talk about the state of the hospitals and the necessity for sanitary reform.—Lytton Strachey
18. Not only love, and the fields, and the bright face of danger, but sacrifice and death and unmerited suffering humbly supported, touch in us the vein of the poetic. We love to think of them, we long to try them, we are humbly hopeful that we may prove heroes also.—Robert Louis Stevenson
19. And when one discovers the church, the mission, any religious body, or any individual caring nothing for deeper and finer thinking and feeling and being, and caring little or nothing for human conditions in the world, one must look elsewhere for the soul, the spirit, which has flown.—Pearl Buck
20. On the one hand, Religion, Speech, the Press, Assemblage, Protest—these the Federal Congress may not touch. They are free. On the other hand, Life, Liberty, and Property—these are to be regulated and restrained by Congress: they may even be taken away provided that the action by which this is done is justly and properly performed. —Alexander Meiklejohn

Exercise 33. Parallelism

From your own reading select and copy three examples of parallelism.

Exercise 34. Parallelism

In the following sentences make the logically parallel ideas as nearly grammatically parallel as possible:

1. The houses have fallen into such disrepair that they are unsafe and breeders of disease.
2. A Japanese tree is small, but it lives long; and, although it is bent and twisted, one seldom sees a wind that can break it.
3. I remember seeing a student touch the handle of the door, and that, as he opened it, I seemed to feel a puff of wind in my face.
4. Raise in the trenches a million men for war! We will raise for peace a million more in the cradle.
5. My senior year was taken up with the study of poetry, writing, and explaining.
6. The labor involved in using these ideas, and which so often makes the writing of themes difficult for some students, is the proper writing and selection of these subjects.
7. Department stores have dressed us all in cheaper clothes and they look smarter too, but we need twice as many of them and it is only from the distance of a block away that they are really pretty.
8. That is why these students should have a school more suited to their needs and not because they have every qualification except brains.
9. I immediately become nervous, confused, and do all the unnecessary things that detract from one's speech.
10. One painted badly; yet he originated his own pictures, while the other painted well but was only a copier of his teacher.
11. Falling rain soothes the ear, a darkening sky rests the sight, and the angry rain on the earth and in the hearts of men is dispelled by the densifying air.
12. Someone has invented curved eyeglasses which are said to fit directly over the eyeball, give full vision, and it is hard to detect them at all.
13. They are working because of a love for their work and with the idea of helping society uppermost in their minds.
14. He was an underling and bullied by his superiors.
15. Bacon says that the mind of man is stretched out and enlarged by "Imagination," but "Reason" "doth bow and bend it into the nature of things."
16. I ate his food, listened to his music, and he told me about the Young Man of Tomorrow, who, he said, would blame the rich, be scornful of the climbing, and to the poor would give more than pity.
17. This habit I had always considered unnatural and something to be ashamed of.

18. My deficiency in grammar is the result of having a secretary look up the doubtful words as well as correcting any too gross grammatical errors.
19. It has never been my privilege to do any writing or use composition in speeches or any such manner.
20. I am inclined to be a procrastinator if not downright lazy.
21. In both these instances you would become natural and spontaneous as well as having freedom in your actions.
22. The use of good English has always been an ideal which I have meant to live up to but have never succeeded.
23. His chief traits of character are sensitiveness, artistic, and a tendency to prefer to be alone.
24. He believed the clergy to be physiologists instead of studying the mysteries of the soul.
25. The student can pick out the type of college that is best suited to his purposes and enroll in it.
26. When a person is ready to compete for his place in the sun, he will perhaps find it best to consider that past dead, the present filled with opportunities, and the future before him.
27. I have contributed to the Baltimore *Sun*, the *Army and Navy Journal*, and I was editor of a school publication.
28. The author is frank, forward, and his eyes are open to the evils of society.
29. The Heath is not only considered as a place where the action of the novel takes place, but I think it is more important than any of the characters.
30. Thus one's ability has broadened when one can master more difficult subjects, when one can learn more understandingly and penetratingly, and at that same time one can be described as having made educational progress.
31. He was one of the most interesting, broadly, and deeply cultured men I have ever known.
32. Hardy treats Egdon Heath sometimes as if it were a real character and at other times as a place.
33. The age was a period of expansion, growth of power, wealth and size, building up the British Empire.
34. Man is always asking whether life is just something to be put up with, or is the zest for living worth while.
35. A reporter must be dependable, trustworthy, and the authenticity of his news must be above question.
36. He found this out and used his information for his own advancement and in order to promote certain unscrupulous plans.
37. I now know of Florence Nightingale as a tireless worker and ready to do anything to accomplish her ends.
38. He was materialistic, selfish, but with a pleasing personality.
39. He was the victim of his own snobbery, lack of independence, and had no intellectual honesty.
40. There is not only graft in politics but also in business.

E. DANGLING MODIFIERS

Modifiers, whether they are words, phrases, or clauses, must attach themselves to a sentence element which is definite, unambiguous, and expressed. The only exception to this principle (see 6, below) is independent elements—such as appositives, interjections, and sentence modifiers—which qualify the sentence as a whole rather than any definite element in it.

A dangling modifier is a modifier which cannot be *both* logically and grammatically attached to some definite element in the sentence. A modifier dangles, therefore, unless it fulfills two requirements: (1) if it *grammatically* attaches itself to an element, it must *logically* modify that element; (2) if it *logically* modifies an element, it must *grammatically* attach itself to that element.

The term "dangling modifier" is somewhat misleading. To dangle implies a point from which to dangle, whereas the dangling modifier often can find no point of suspension whatever. In trying to diagram a dangling modifier, we frequently cannot find even a *wrong* word to which we may attach it.

In our study of dangling participles (see pp. 105-108) we saw that a participle must attach itself *grammatically* to an element which it may modify *logically*. The same principle applies to other classes of modifiers. We can understand these dangling modifiers more easily if we classify them grammatically:

1. Dangling participles:[1]

Examples: Dangling: Written in a light lyrical manner, the *author* creates a poetical effect. (*Written* cannot logically attach itself to *author,* and there is no other word to which it can be attached.)

Right: Written in a light lyrical manner, the author's *poem* creates a poetical effect. (*Written* logically and grammatically attaches itself to *poem.*)

Dangling: The light *switch* could not be found, *groping* in the dark. (*Groping* cannot logically attach itself to *switch,* and there is no other word to which it can be attached.)

Right: Groping in the dark, *I* could not find the light switch. (*Groping* logically and grammatically attaches itself to *I.*)

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[1] This section should be read in conjunction with the discussion of dangling participles, pp. 105-108.

2. Dangling infinitive phrases:

Example: Dangling: To understand poetry, the *poem* must have some value for the reader. (*To understand* cannot logically be attached to *poem,* and cannot grammatically be attached to *reader.*)

Right: To understand poetry, the *reader* must find some value in it. (*To understand* logically and grammatically attaches itself to *reader.*)

3. Dangling gerund phrases:

Example: Dangling: By pulling a switch the *machinery* begins to turn. (*By pulling* logically attaches itself to *machinery;* there is no other word to which it may be grammatically attached.)

Right: By pulling a switch the *operator* starts the machinery. (*By pulling* logically and grammatically attaches itself to *operator.*)

4. Dangling prepositional phrases:

Example: Dangling: As a clerk, many excellent business *contacts* were made. (*As a clerk* cannot logically be attached to *contacts,* and there is no other word to which it can be grammatically attached.)

Right: As a clerk, he made many excellent business contacts. (*As a clerk* logically and grammatically attaches itself to *he.*)

5. Dangling elliptical clauses. An ellipsis occurs when there is omitted from a construction one or more words which are obviously understood but which must be supplied to make the expression grammatically complete. For example, the sentence *The book I showed you is mine* contains an ellipsis of the relative pronoun *which* (or *that*)—*The book* WHICH (or THAT) *I showed you is mine.*

An elliptical clause is a clause shortened by the ellipsis, or omission, of both the subject and the copulative or auxiliary verb.

Examples: Right: While [it is] *true,* the statement is misleading.
When [he is] *reading,* he squints his eyes.

An elliptical clause dangles if the omitted subject is not the same as the subject of the clause to which the elliptical clause attaches itself.

Example: Dangling: When six years old, my *father* took me to the circus. (The elliptical clause, if completed, should read: *When I was six years old.* But the omitted subject, *I,* is not the same as the subject of the clause *my father took me to the circus.* The elliptical clause therefore dangles.)

Like dangling participles, dangling elliptical clauses may be cured in two ways (see pp. 107-108): first, by inserting, as the grammatical subject of the elliptical clause, a logical subject; second, by inserting, as the subject of the principal clause, a subject to which the elliptical clause may logically and grammatically attach itself.

Examples: Cure No. 1: When *I was* six years old, my father took me to the circus.
Cure No. 2: When six years old, *I* was taken to the circus by my father.

6. **Exception: sentence modifiers.** As we have seen (see pp. 113-114), sentence modifiers are an exception to the rule banning dangling modifiers. Sentence modifiers attach themselves to the sentence as a whole rather than to any particular element; they frequently designate a general action, not the action performed by any specific person or thing.

Examples: Generally speaking, the principle holds true. (participle)
To tell the truth, he is untrustworthy. (infinitive)
In shooting, the rifle should be lowered after each shot. (gerund)
As for them, I do not consider them. (prepositional phrase)
When reading, the light should be over the left shoulder. (elliptical clause)

7. ***Due to* and *caused by*.** Both of these phrases are considered, like participles, adjectival; they must attach themselves to a noun or noun-equivalent which is definitely present in the sentence. They may not attach themselves to any other part of speech except a noun or noun-equivalent, nor can they be attached to an *idea implied* in the sentence.

Examples: Dangling: He could not see well, *due to* excessive reading. (*Due to,* being adjectival, should be attached to a noun or noun-equivalent. The only possibility is *He,* but *He* was not *due to* excessive reading. *Due to* logically attaches itself to the idea of *his-being-unable-to-see,* but cannot grammatically be attached to it.)

Right: His poor vision was *due to* excessive reading. (*Due to* now both logically and grammatically attaches itself to *vision.*)

Dangling: His finger was infected, *caused by* a cut. (*Caused by,* being adjectival, should be attached to a noun or noun-equivalent. The only possibility is *finger,* but logically the *finger* was not *caused* by a cut. *Caused by* logically attaches itself to the idea of *his-finger-being-cut,* but cannot grammatically be attached to it.)

Right: The *infection* in his finger was *caused by* a cut. (*Caused by* now both logically and grammatically attaches itself to *infection.*)

Note: Owing to is considered as adverbial, and is exempt from the rule. *Due to* is also gaining ground as the adverbial equivalent of *because of,* but is not yet considered as good literary usage.[2]

8. *Thus* and *thereby* followed by a participle. This weak and overworked construction often dangles. Like *due to* and *caused by,* it is controlled by the same principles as govern the dangling participle.

Example: Dangling: The shades were drawn, *thus proving* that our friends were not at home. (*Thus proving,* being adjectival, must attach itself to a noun or noun-equivalent. It cannot logically attach itself to the noun *shades* and cannot grammatically be attached to the participle *drawn.*)

Right: The drawn shades proved that our friends were not at home.

In most of the foregoing sentences the dangling constructions have preceded the principal clause. But note that if these constructions were to follow the principal clause, they would dangle just as ineffectually. Whether first or last, they persistently try to attach themselves to the subject of the main verb. If that subject cannot both logically and grammatically accommodate them, they will continue to dangle until we rescue them.

Exercise 35. Dangling Modifiers

Rewrite the following sentences, eliminating the dangling constructions:

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[2] See *Webster's New International Dictionary* (2nd ed.), *due* (5).

1. The student misses many ideas of other students, thereby tending toward a narrow point of view.
2. Graphed thus, one could see that the characters moved on a straight line throughout the play.
3. Due to a lapse of three years between high school and college, my English became quite disreputable.
4. Having discussed the more essential factors of the poem, there are still a few personal reasons I have for liking it.
5. Due to my father's death I was forced to leave school.
6. With no thought of disloyalty to the first office, it could never compare with the present one.
7. After speaking with the dean he advised me to take the course.
8. While browsing in the art gallery, the paintings of the Public Works Artists particularly attracted my attention.
9. Since starting school it has been convenient to have dinner in a cafeteria.
10. In order to obtain a sufficiently varied and comprehensive point of view, many books must be read.
11. My grade was a "C," due to my ignorance of certain rules.
12. The easiest way to wind up a story is to eliminate the difficult characters by means of death, thereby making room for true love to assert itself.
13. In the end of the poem we find that Miniver keeps on drinking, thus giving us the whole idea of the story.
14. Every program that is to be broadcast must first be censored to be sure that it is eligible to go on the air.
15. The student proved to me that it takes more than one star to have a successful football team.
16. Someone has said that the agricultural problem will be solved by the application of engineering and scientific methods, thereby reducing the cost of production.
17. I do not regret knowing the Lithuanian language, but as a child it was not a good background for English.
18. There are many people in the world who do not realize the significance of clear thinking except when necessary to do mechanical thinking.
19. We should not curry favor even though we know that in so doing it will help our grades.
20. Labor suffered a serious setback, due to the high wages provided in the code.
21. The poem is musical, due to Robinson's selection of words.
22. After having lived within earshot of violent Saturday night shooting, a murder or two in the movies does not surprise me.
23. Now, due to the volume of sales, the price was dropped to seven dollars.
24. With a desire for profit, these farms should soon raise a surplus crop.
25. A ticket from Germany to England, floating down the Rhine and seeing a good deal of France and Belgium on the way, costs less than one pays for a little trip from Washington to New York.

F. FAULTY REFERENCE OF PRONOUNS

A pronoun should refer to a definite and unmistakable antecedent. The failure to make the reference clear is sometimes the result of carelessness, but more often the earmark of muddy or illogical thinking. (For a full discussion, see pp. 68-69.)

G. POINT OF VIEW

The point of view from which a writer looks at his idea is worth more consideration than it usually receives.

Here is a case in point: the first draft of the foregoing sentence read as follows: "The point of view from which a writer looks at his idea is worth more consideration than *is usually given* to it." The sentence seemed ineffective. What was the trouble? The author puzzled over it for a moment. The idea connected with *point of view*—which was the core of the sentence—seemed to have become overshadowed by the idea connected with *consideration*. Suddenly the author realized his mistake. In condemning shifts of viewpoint, he had shifted his own! He had begun the sentence intending to say something about a *point of view* and had ended with the idea that *consideration* is rarely given to the subject. We may contrast the original and revised sentences in this way:

Original: Point of view is worth more consideration than *is given.*
Revised: Point of view is worth more consideration than *it* receives.

The passive verb *is given* shifts attention to *consideration,* which was not the subject of our sentence or the chief subject of our thought. In the revised sentence, *it* shifts our attention back from *consideration* to the antecedent, *point of view.* The *point of view* remains the focal point of our attention and is still the subject of an active verb, *receives.*

This rather involved analysis has two objects: first, to show that unnecessary shifts in point of view are difficult to detect and diagnose; second, to show that the maintenance of a steady point of view is important to a clear, well-written sentence.

Needless shifts may be classified as follows:

1. Needless shift of subject. We have just discussed one such instance. Note also the following examples:

Examples: Needless shift: We hear of some wonderful deed, or perhaps the *newspaper* brings us facts which can be woven into a story.

Improved: We hear of some wonderful deed, or perhaps read in the paper facts which can be woven into a story.

Needless shift: We can feel the beauty and grandeur of the mountains, and *they* fill us with awe.

Improved: We can feel the beauty and grandeur of the mountains and are filled with awe at the sight of them.

2. Needless shift of voice. A shift in voice necessitates a shift in a subject. We should ask ourselves in each instance, "Is a shift of subject desirable? Is the passive voice more effective than the active?" (For the weak use of the passive voice, see p. 96.)

Example: Needless shift: My failure *did not bother* me because I felt that there was a great deal *to be gained* from the course.

Improved: My failure did not bother me because *I* felt that *I* could gain a great deal from the course.

3. Needless shift in number. Sometimes this fault is due to faulty pronoun reference, sometimes to a shift in point of view.

Example: Needless shift: There are many ruses practiced by *one* of his profession. *They* pretend to be absent-minded, whereas *they* are really stupid.

Improved: Members of his profession practice many ruses. *They* pretend to be absent-minded, whereas *they* are really stupid.

4. Needless shift in tense. Shifts in tense are confusing to the reader; needless shifts should by all means be avoided.

Example: Needless shift: He *told* her that he did not love her, and she *replies* that she *is* tired of him.

Improved: He *told* her that he did not love her, and she *replied* that she *was* tired of him.

5. Needless shift of person. This error also evidences lack of a definite point of view. The writer usually is not sure whether he is talking about a third person, or the reader, or himself. The following sentence illustrates *two* shifts in point of view.

Example: Needless shift: They do not understand that *one* must always miss many good things in order to get the most out of the few *we* can enjoy. Master *your* leisure.

Improved: One does not understand that *he* must always miss many good things in order to get the most out of the few *he* can enjoy. *He* must learn to master *his* leisure.

Exercise 36. Needless Shifts

In the following sentences correct the needless shifts of subject, voice, number, tense, or person:

1. A hobby is valuable not only for the enjoyment and relaxation received, but for the keen curiosity aroused in the subjects concerned.
2. In an informal manner they discuss things, they are described, and interest is obtained.
3. Almost everyone, at some time or other, has wanted with their whole heart to have something that our minds tell us we must not have.
4. He wished everyone to live their own individual life.
5. I marvel that Galli Curci sings so easily, but I marveled more on hearing an old record of Melba's, for I enjoy feeling there the triumph of a difficulty overcome.
6. We went to the party and a good time was had.
7. John is walking down the street, and suddenly he stops, as a shot rang out.
8. From the middle of an Austin one does not realize that the car is small unless we should draw up beside a bus.
9. We can see the brook outside the house, and its musical sound is heard all night.
10. To the Romans, at first glance, the Britons looked like angels, and it was considered by Saint Augustine a happy coincidence that the place was named Angle-land.
11. If a person is new to the city, it is hard for you to know where to go.
12. It took eleven centuries to build the Vatican, with changes made by every new architect, while each Pope will add something here and there.
13. An electric sewing machine will stop instantly if, after you take your foot from the pedal, the wheel has just a touch of your hand.
14. Currier was one of the first American artists, and we treasure some of the pictures which were made by him before he took Ives into the business.
15. Montaigne was a nervous child and, as a part of the cure, orchestra music is arranged for by his father to wake the boy up in the morning.
16. Authorities believe that the 25th of December was not the date of Christ's birth, but that the English pagans had already set aside this time as a feast day to the sun.
17. With plenty of sleep a man can do almost anything, but without sleep almost nothing can be done.

18. The old Greek theatres were acoustically perfect; the fact that a whisper was everywhere audible was possibly owing to the mountains surrounding.
19. The Boston merchant introduced the capitalistic system into America and dissolution is gradually forced upon the Colonial communes.
20. In the colors of Norwegian landscapes, a greenish light often filters down from the sky over the land and sickened it.

H. MIXED AND INCOMPLETE CONSTRUCTIONS

We commit errors of mixed or incomplete construction either from absent-mindedness or from ignorance of grammar. We commence a sentence with one grammatical construction and then shift to another. A few sentences will illustrate the mistake, but we must exercise vigilance to avoid it.

Examples: Mixed construction: Loons, that seem to be trying to fly in all directions at the same time, their actions seem insane. (The writer shifts from his first subject, *loons,* to a second, *actions.*)

Improved: Loons, that seem to be trying to go in all directions at once, seem truly insane in their actions.

Mixed construction: The importance of this muscular contraction to the general circulation must be remembered that the blood is forced along the veins. (When the writer reached *remembered,* he forgot that he had reached the end of his statement; he probably thought that he had written, *It must be remembered.*

Improved: This muscular contraction, important to the circulation, must be remembered; it forces the blood along the veins.

Further improved: We must remember that this muscular contraction is important to the circulation in that it forces the blood along the veins.

Mixed construction: The things he wanted *to do,* he didn't seem to be able to do them. (*The things he wanted to do* is already the object; *them* as an object is therefore superfluous.)

Improved: The things he wanted to do he didn't seem to be able to do.

Further improved: He didn't seem to be able to do the things he wanted.

Mixed construction: Man, when he becomes tired and lethargic, then is the time for recreation. (The writer starts with the subject, *man;* then, dropping the construction, he concludes as if he had begun his sentence with an *if* or *when.*)

Improved: When a man becomes tired and lethargic, then is the time for recreation. *Or:* Man, when he becomes tired and lethargic, needs recreation.

In this connection, note also the misuse of principal and subordinate clauses instead of noun clauses. (See pp. 118-119.)

Exercise 37. Mixed Constructions

Correct the following sentences:

1. What is a theme, that the writing of which should be so laborious to most students?
2. Later I left the restaurant with a feeling that the combination of the food, the price, the music, and the cool temperature, my dinner had been a huge success.
3. Maybe the author, if he knew business men and their sons as well as I do—which is not as well as I should like to know them—he would not have said that.
4. I believe that the logical solution is to have one college, to which students are admitted and participate on the basis of their intelligence.
5. The people with whom we come in contact with each day are usually different from what we think.
6. I am a victim of that finer emotion over which I have no control and because of which I fear that some day I will become a much discussed personality.
7. The Supreme Court saw it fit to declare the Act unconstitutional.
8. In the closing lines the poet brings out the thought that, although men may come and go and, while their works may remain for a while, they too will eventually go, nature remains steadfast and true.
9. I have selected a poem from a writer that I scarcely know anything concerning his life.
10. This rivalry had become so keen until the teams were highly excited.
11. It was very easy to picture a medieval church and a moonlight night such as Keats describes them.
12. There was no one at home in whom he could confide or speak to.
13. A good carriage means a relaxed carriage, not a strained position when the chest must feel as if you pulled it upward, not push it out.
14. Sculpture, someone said, is the most universally appealing of the arts, and music the least, which I should not think so, since every wild tribe has his drum even though nothing else to do.
15. A man who is lost without a purpose, and I think he is of little use reading unless from the special desire to find out about some one thing.
16. The medieval executioner is always shown in pictures with his hose down, for they were too tight that he could not bend over.
17. Indirect lighting is good for the eyes, but takes all life from the room and the furniture without emphasis or shadows.

18. There comes a time in the life of every man that he stands at the crossroads.
19. None of the authors we now call great have minded a peculiar disregard for dirt, and usually liked to hobnob with unwashed people or like Walt Whitman, who slept on a pallet.
20. Nor can one age ever understand another until we can reproduce the everyday noises which were affecting the people, and in this way they are made what they are.

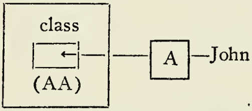
I. FAULTY AND ILLOGICAL COMPARISONS

The ability to compare or contrast one object with another is one of the best tests of our ability to reason logically. The following principles are not easy to master but will sharpen our wits:

1. In comparing an individual *A* to a member of a group *AA*:

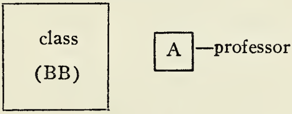
a. In the comparative degree:

(1) When comparing A to other members of *its own group* AA, include A in the group.



Example: Wrong: John is taller than any boy in his class. (John is one of the boys in the class and cannot be taller than himself!)
Right: John is taller than any *other* boy in his class.

(2) When comparing A to members *not of its own group* BB, exclude A from the group.



Example: Wrong: The professor was taller than any other member of the class. (The professor was not a member of the class.)
Right: The professor was taller than any member of the class.

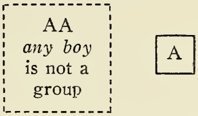
b. In the superlative degree:

When comparing A to other members of its own group AA, be sure:

(1) That the group AA includes A.

Example: Wrong: He is the tallest of *all the other boys* in the class. (The expression *other boys* excludes A.)
Right: He is the tallest of all the boys in the class.

(2) That AA names a *group*.



Example: Wrong: He is the tallest of *any boy* in the class. (*Any boy* is not a group.)
Right: He is the tallest of all the boys in the class. (*All the boys* constitutes a group.)

2. Dangerous elliptical constructions:

a. The construction *as . . . as, if not . . .*

Example: Wrong: He is *as tall,* if not taller than I.

The foregoing elliptical sentence, if completed, would read: *He is as tall AS, if not taller than I.* Good literary usage requires that the first element in the comparison be completed.

Examples: Right: He is *as tall as* I, if not taller.
Right: He is *as tall as,* if not taller than, I.

b. The construction, *one of the —est, if not the —est . . .*

Example: Wrong: He arrived on *one of the hottest, if not the hottest day* of the year.

This elliptical sentence, if completed, would read: *He arrived on one of the hottest DAYS, if not the hottest day of the year.* As in *a* above, good literary usage requires that the first element in the comparison be completed.

Example: He arrived on *one of the hottest days* of the year, if not the hottest.

c. Other dangerous elliptical constructions:

Elliptical clauses of comparison which end in nouns or pronouns are frequently ambiguous. The ambiguity can be dispelled by the writer's completing the ellipsis in his own mind and applying the grammatical rules of case.

(1) *Clauses ending in pronouns.* Note the case of the final pronoun. Should it be the subject or object of the elliptical verb? Both sentences below are correct, but are entirely different in meaning:

Examples: I see you *as often as* (or, *oftener than*) SHE [sees you].
I see you *as often as* (or, *oftener than*) [I see] HER.

(2) *Clauses ending in nouns.* Nouns, unlike pronouns, do not have case endings. Therefore the ellipsis should be completed to make the meaning clear. The sentence *I see you as often as John* might mean either (a) *I see you as often as John* [*sees you*], or (b) *I see you as often as* [*I see*] *John.* In the following examples the ellipsis has been completed and the sentences are clear:

Examples: I see you as often as (or, *oftener than*) I SEE *John.*
I see you as often as (or, *oftener than*) *John* SEES YOU.
I see you as often as (or, *oftener than*) *John* DOES.
I see you as often as (or, *oftener than*) I SEE *John.*
I was better acquainted with Smith than WAS *Jones.*
I was better acquainted with Smith than WITH *Jones.*

3. Omission of the standard of comparison. The use of the comparative degree of an adjective or adverb implies that the writer is setting up in his own mind a standard of comparison. He is measuring something by comparing it with something else. That standard of comparison should be either clearly expressed or clearly implied. Note the absence of a clear standard of comparison in the following sentences marked *Vague*. Whether or not the comparison is clear often depends upon the context.

Examples: Vague: I was able to study in my room *more easily.*
Clear: I was able to study in my room more easily *than in the library.*
Vague: An uneducated man is an easier prey for propaganda.
Clear: An uneducated man is an easier prey for propaganda *than an educated man.*

Exercise 38. Faulty and Illogical Comparisons

Correct the following sentences, making the comparisons either logical or complete, as the case may be:

1. It is for a student's future benefit to know more grammar when he graduates.
2. He reads better than any boy of his age.
3. His country house was more convenient than any of the other houses in the city.
4. Henry is the most conceited of all the other members of his fraternity.
5. Henry is the most conceited of any member of his fraternity.
6. Italy, particularly Rome, would be my next choice. I think that I should better appreciate the Latin I have studied.
7. I think that the paintings express the common people's lives more than any other age of art.
8. He was not so fond of golf as Mary.
9. As a child I had better command of the Lithuanian language than English.
10. The rich have benefited as much or more than the poor.
11. The weather is as hot if not hotter than Florida.
12. He plays the violin better than any member of the orchestra.
13. He came to see us oftener than John.
14. He was as bright as, if not brighter than the average freshman.
15. What with a motor of some kind attached to everything, our apartment is as full of vibrations as living on a boat.
16. Our grandmothers thought that eating tomatoes would be more dangerous than Eve's famous apple.
17. It is better to listen to chimes ringing a mile away.
18. There are fewer accidents with clean windshields and headlights.
19. Iced foods are worse with meals because the cold retards the digestion.
20. Much old furniture used to be painted red, like the fashion in mahogany.

J. FAULTY OMISSIONS

Do not omit a word or phrase that is necessary to either the grammatical or the logical completeness of the sentence.

1. **Do not omit the standard of comparison.** (See Faulty and Illogical Comparisons, p. 209.)

2. **In formal writing it is inadvisable to omit the conjunction *that* after verbs of saying, thinking, believing, etc.,** especially when *that* is followed by a noun. The noun is liable to be read as the object of the verb of saying rather than as the subject of the following clause.

Examples: Ambiguous: I *know truth* is stranger than fiction.
Clear: I know *that* truth is stranger than fiction.
Ambiguous: He *says things* are not what they seem.
Clear: He says *that* things are not what they seem.

3. Do not omit a signal that would make parallelism clear. (See pp. 190-192.)

Example: Parallelism not clear: He said that he would come and John had made the arrangements.
Parallelism clear: He said he would come and *that* John had made the arrangements.

4. Do not supply a verb form from one part of the sentence to another unless the same form is grammatically correct in both parts.

a. Auxiliary verb or copulative verb [3]

Example: Wrong: The chairs were arranged and the table set. (Implies that *the table* WERE *set.*)
Right: The chairs were arranged and the table *was* set.

b. Principal verb

Example: Wrong: He has always shown, and will continue to, the greatest consideration. (Implies *to* SHOWN.)
Right: He has always shown, and will continue to *show,* the greatest consideration.

5. If the verb *to be* is used as a modal verb, it must be repeated, not implied, when used as an auxiliary verb in the same sentence.[4]

Example: Wrong: I *am* her friend and counting on her loyalty. (*Am* is used as a modal verb. It is implied as an auxiliary in the verb phrase (*am*) *counting.* It should therefore be repeated.
Right: I *am* her friend and *am* counting on her loyalty.

6. Repeat articles, possessive pronouns, etc., when clearness demands such repetition.

Examples: He saw the president and general manager.
(The same man held both positions.)
He saw the president and *the* general manager.
(Two separate men are indicated.)

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[3] For auxiliary verb, see p. 97. For copulative verb, see pp. 80-81.

[4] For modal and auxiliary verbs, see pp. 70-71.

She had a red and white hat.
(One hat is indicated.)
She had a red and *a* white hat.
(Two hats are indicated.)
She admired her uncle and guardian.
(Her uncle was her guardian.)
She admired her uncle and her guardian.
(Two persons are indicated.)

7. When a sentence contains two idioms which employ different prepositions, insert the preposition appropriate to each idiom.

Example: Wrong: He had an interest and ability for research.
Right, but awkward: He had an interest *in* and ability *for* research.
Smoother: He had an interest in research and an ability for it.

Note: Constructions of this kind are always awkward and should be avoided whenever possible.

Exercise 39. Faulty Omissions

Correct the following sentences:

1. No main character attempts and succeeds in solving his problems.
2. I shall be able to receive as high or higher grades than I received in high school.
3. He acted in conformity and accordance with the regulations.
4. I saw that the people were there and dinner on the table.
5. I am going to town and in need of some money.
6. Again I repeat physical education is necessary for the college student.
7. He formerly was a clerk and always hoping for a promotion.
8. He has occupied, and continues to, a responsible position.
9. Angela knew the two young lovers were in difficulties.
10. His brother is as handsome, if not more handsome than he.
11. Authorities agree, and common sense, that since it is uncomfortable to sit looking upward, any ceiling decoration whatever is absurd.
12. I cannot see the play accomplished its purpose.
13. Exercise may make life pleasanter, but it is doubtful it has much influence on the state of general health.
14. One knows so many theories as to what love is, one knows there must be many different kinds of it.
15. It is a deep gloom indeed the warm winds of April or the gaiety of music fail to dispel.
16. A cloudburst is often just a whirlwind of water that was caught up by clouds passing over the sea and did not descend until the clouds floated inland.

17. I meet many people, and have also in the past, who gladly sacrifice for friends, but who refuse to consider the larger needs of mankind.
18. He fell in love at the same time with his boyhood sweetheart and secretary.
19. He said morality fits itself to the age and showed Ambition, not Service, has now become a virtue with us.
20. I imagine dreams are a reflection of subconscious thinking.

K. NEEDLESS REPETITION

1. Guard against the needless repetition of *that* in lengthy clauses after verbs of saying, etc.

Example: Wrong: He said that, in view of the circumstances, *that* he would consider my request.

Right: He said that, in view of the circumstances, he would consider my request.

2. Guard against the insertion of a needless second subject for a verb. This error sometimes occurs when the first subject is an infinitive or gerund phrase, or a noun clause.

Examples: Wrong: To look at the question from this angle *it* makes the situation seem ridiculous.

Right: To look at the question from this angle makes the situation seem ridiculous.

Wrong: That I came to college to obtain a cultural background *it* is true.

Right: That I came to college to obtain a cultural background is true.

Note: If each of these wrong sentences were to be inverted, the *it* would be justified as an expletive—as, *It makes the situation seem ridiculous to look at the question from this angle. It is true that I came to college to obtain a cultural background.*

Exercise 40. Needless Repetitions

Correct the following sentences:

1. Her mind wandered toward Wildeve, her former lover, with whom she had come in contact with several times during the year.
2. He told me that the next time he went looking for a squirrel that it would be in the dictionary.
3. He saw that, in case it should rain, that the picnic would be postponed.
4. He is the man to whom I was speaking to the other day.
5. What I told him it can be left to your imagination.

L. NEGATIVES

It is often said that two negatives make an affirmative. The statement is not strictly true.

In older English the second negative strengthened the first—for example, *"Nor I neither"* (Shakespeare). Today, however, the double negative is in good usage only when the writer or speaker desires to make a positive statement in an indirect way, as, "I was *not unmoved* by his plea."

One type of double negative is illiterate, as exemplified by the following: "I *don't* see *no* excuse for him."

Confusion frequently arises in the use of certain words which *imply* a negative idea—*only, hardly, scarcely, but* (*i.e.,* except), etc.

Examples: *Wrong:* He did *not* eat *scarcely* any breakfast.
Right: He ate *scarcely* any breakfast.
Wrong: He did *not* have *only* one friend. (The sentence means that he had more than one friend.)
Right: He had *only* one friend.
Wrong: I *cannot* do *but* one thing at a time.
Right: *I can* do *but* one thing at a time.

Exercise 41. Negatives

Correct the following sentences, if necessary. Justify, if possible, any of the double negatives.

1. He did not hardly expect to meet her.
2. I feel as if I only had but one friend in the world.
3. He could not read nor write.
4. I don't know that it makes scarcely any difference.
5. His father was not sure that no one but he could have done it.
6. Henry would not have done it, I don't think.
7. I scarcely had time to eat only a bite.
8. He spoke to his friend in no uncertain language.
9. I do not feel as if I could barely keep awake.
10. The preacher was not intolerant of the mistakes of others.

CHAPTER VIII

THE EFFECTIVE SENTENCE

THE unified and logical sentence is not always effective; the effective sentence, however, is always unified and logical. Good writing is something more than clear writing. The sentences that we remember are distinguished by their forcefulness and originality. If, for example, we should write, "Most people learn only by experience," we would make ourselves clear; when Benjamin Franklin wrote, "Experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn in no other," he was effective.

Several characteristics mark effective sentences: (1) proper emphasis obtained by effective arrangement of the elements of the sentence; (2) economy of expression—an avoidance of wordiness; (3) variety in structure and arrangement; (4) exactness and richness of diction; and (5) originality of expression.

He who would write to be remembered must remember to *write*. Writing is more than stringing words together; it is even more than making oneself understood. Writing which is really worthy of the name stirs the mind or imagination of him who reads; it imparts a sense of pleasure. Even the reader who is ignorant of the principles of rhetoric discriminates between indifferent writing and good writing; he responds, though he may not know why, to forceful and original methods of expression.

Although few of us are ambitious to become writers, we all want to know how to write well. The process involves reading, study, and practice. We should analyze the writing of authors whose styles attract us, we should become acquainted with the general principles which underlie the art of self-expression, and, above all, we should revise and polish our own writings.

This chapter briefly sums up the most important principles of effective writing and provides material upon which we can experiment.

A. EMPHASIS

To make a sentence effective we must first have a keen sense of the relative values of our ideas. Not until we have these values firmly in mind can we study the technique of bringing them out in proper relief. The writer's problem closely resembles that of the stage director who, after studying his script, decides first where he wishes the attention of the audience to concentrate, and then calls into play two technical principles—lighting and grouping. If one character is to be dominant at a given moment, the director places him where he will command more attention than the other characters who may be present on the stage. Furthermore, to heighten the effect, he often resorts to lighting devices.

We too can group and light our sentences. Having decided where we wish emphasis to fall, we can resort to several technical principles in order to bring certain ideas into high relief and to group others where they will attract relatively little attention.

1. Proper subordination. We have already seen, in our study of the unified sentence,[1] how we may use superordination to bring out dominant ideas, and subordination to minimize those of lesser importance. This principle is an important aid to both unity and emphasis. A weak sentence will result if we put a main idea in a subordinate construction, and vice versa. The following sentences will further illustrate the point:

Weak: I attended college, my subjects *being* English, history, and physics.
Improved: In college my subjects *were* English, history, and physics.
Weak: He passed the examination, *proving* that he was not stupid.
Improved: His passing the examination *proved* that he was not stupid.

In the revised sentences two features are apparent: first, the main idea has been placed in a superordinate construction, while the minor idea has been relegated to a subordinate construction; second, the principal idea appears at the end of the sentence—a fact which leads us to our next consideration, the arrangement of the sentence.

2. Arrangement. Every sentence has two strategic points—the beginning and the end. A sentence weakly begun is like a defective firecracker which sputters feebly and goes out; a sentence concluded ineffectually achieves only a muffled "pop." The introduction, which lights the fuse, must burn steadily; the conclusion must contain all the explosive quality which we wish to give the sentence.

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[1] See pp. 168-181.

a. The ending. The ending of a sentence is, for two reasons, the most strategic point: first, because the material is fresh in the reader's mind; second, because it frequently builds to a climax. If we allow our sentences to trail off inconclusively, we are deliberately throwing away a strategic advantage—much as if a general, seeing a weak spot in the opposing line, should stupidly throw his troops where the enemy was most strongly concentrated.

Theoretically, the most emphatic sentence we could construct would have its main idea embodied in a superordinate construction at the end. But it would be foolish to suppose that all our sentences should achieve equal emphasis or should be modeled on the same pattern. Let us examine carefully the sentences below, noting, in both the original and revised versions, both the construction in which the principal idea appears and the position which it occupies. The sentences have been classified according to the subordinate constructions which frequently weaken the effect by being placed at the end.

Participial phrases: *Weak:* Since childhood I have read good literature, *never having been fond of trash.*

Improved: Even in childhood I was not fond of trash; *I read good literature.*

Subordinate clauses: *Weak:* I was suspended from college at the end of my first year *because I did not know how to study.*

Improved: Because I did not know how to study, I was suspended from college at the end of my first year.

Note: If the author had regarded the cause as more important than the result, the original sentence would be the more emphatic of the two.

Weak: The car skidded and smashed into a tree *when he put his foot on the brake.*

Improved: When he put his foot on the brake, the car skidded and smashed into a tree.

Note: The arrangement of this sentence, like that of the foregoing, depends upon the context.

Nominative absolute: *Weak:* He could not go, *his car having been stolen the day before.*

Improved: As his car had been stolen the day before, he could not go.

Parenthetical expressions: *Weak:* Mr. Smith is not consistent, *in my opinion.*
Improved: Mr. Smith, *in my opinion,* is not consistent.
Prepositional phrases: *Weak:* I read of her sudden death *in some New York paper.*
Improved: In some New York paper I read of her sudden death.

As we have noted, it is not always either possible or advisable to end each sentence with a principal idea in a superordinate construction. If, however, we examine well constructed sentences, we shall discover that even when the writers end their sentences with subordinate constructions, they usually end them emphatically. Compare the examples below (all of which end with subordinate constructions) with the weak illustrations which we have just studied:

Examples: I daresay that when I get out of this bed I shall do some deed of an almost terrible virtue.—G. K. Chesterton
Man, we suspect, is the only animal capable of persuading himself that his hardships are medicine to the soul, of flattering himself into a conviction that some mortal spasm was a fortifying discipline.—Christopher Morley
I once sought refuge in a deserted country churchyard, where the gravestones stood higgledy-piggledy among the long grass, their inscriptions almost obliterated by moss and time.—W. N. P. Barbellion

b. Beginnings. Except for the ending, the beginning is the most emphatic point in the sentence. This is the reader's introduction to the idea which we wish him to grasp. To reach his goal he does not want to fight his way through a mist of vague, unimportant, or inconclusive words. The chief offenders against emphasis are parenthetical expressions and conjunctive adverbs.

Parenthetical expressions: *Weak: Personally,* I do not like him.
Improved: I do not like him.
(*Personally* is usually redundant.)
Weak: As I see it, his case is hopeless.
Improved: His case, *as I see it,* is hopeless.
Conjunctive adverbs: *Weak: However,* there is another point to consider.
Improved: There is, *however,* another point to consider.

We have been considering the negative aspects of the beginnings of sentences. The *do's* are even more important than the *don't's.* The best positive advice for us to follow is, to use the musician's phrase, to make a strong "attack." The sentences below illustrate the theory:

> For about 999,950 years the chief preoccupation of man has been getting a living.—Henry Pratt Fairchild
>
> Shut your College gates against the votary of knowledge, throw him back upon the searchings and the efforts of his own mind; he will gain by being spared an entrance into your Babel.—John Henry Newman
>
> A nonsense universe, this, if we are to think in terms of ultimate or absolute truth, but a very convenient and perhaps necessary provisional sketch of the universe, in the existing state of knowledge.—Esmé Wingfield-Stratford

c. Loose and periodic sentences. To aid us in studying the arrangement of the sentence, we may classify sentences as loose or periodic. A periodic sentence is not grammatically complete until the very end; a loose sentence is grammatically complete before it concludes. If, however, a sentence is not grammatically complete until very near the end, it may be called a *virtually* periodic sentence. Let us look at examples of each:

> *Loose:* The ideal of marriage in the past depended upon the authority of the husband, which was admitted as a right by the wife.—Bertrand Russell
>
> (The sentence is grammatically complete with the word *husband.*)
>
> *Periodic:* Far away, on the almost bare line of the prairie horizon, a group of trees used to show.—Margaret Lynn
>
> (The sentence is not grammatically complete until the last word.)
>
> *Virtually periodic:* To deny that every day and in every way material civilization was getting better and better, or at any rate fatter and fatter, would hardly have occurred to any ordinary person in the seventies.—Esmé Wingfield-Stratford
>
> (The sentence is grammatically complete with the word *occurred.*)

Periodic and virtually periodic sentences are strong because they hold the idea suspended until the last moment, and then clinch it, usually with a vigorous word or phrase. We must not suppose, however, that a periodic sentence is always preferable to a loose one. As a matter of fact, we shall find more loose than periodic sentences in almost any specimen of good writing. The loose sentence is more natural than the periodic, which, although effective, is at times strained or formal, even though emphatic. But valuable practice can be obtained by experimenting with writing sentences of both types.

d. The climax. When a number of cumulative ideas occur in the same sentence, they can be made effective by being arranged in climactic order. The author of the following sentence employed this device:

> It [the world] is a rare gymnasium, to be sure; but it is also a blood-spattered abattoir, a theatre of pain, an anabasis of travail, a Calvary and a Crucifixion.—W. N. P. Barbellion

e. The anticlimax. Sometimes the author, to achieve an effect, may arrange his series in the inverse order to achieve an anticlimax. Although an effective anticlimax is as difficult to master as the art of telling a humorous story, we can profitably experiment with it.

The writer of the following sentence, waxing rhetorical, reached his emotional height and then—fell off, achieving an anticlimax which was quite unintentional.

> The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust, sweat, and blood; and who strives valiantly and errs and comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming.

Compare this with another example:

> It will be terrifying, when we open in September, to see a row of eager faces shining with expectation that I have a secret to make their writing easy, to see pencils poised for a word of wisdom as if I were a balloon of hottest gas and would presently loose the windy vent; still more terrifying to behold a general nodding of curly heads or snapping after flies.[2] —Charles S. Brooks

f. Variety in arrangement of elements. We have seen how the sentence can be unified and strengthened by placing dominant ideas in major constructions and less important ideas in subordinate constructions.[3] We have also seen how we may lend emphasis to the sentence by taking advantage of its strategic points —the beginning and the end.[4] We know, furthermore, that in the interest of clearness we should group related elements together.[5]

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[2] "To Be Read Only by Serious Stupid Persons," from *A Thread of English Road.* New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1924.

[3] See pp. 171-179.

[4] See pp. 216-219.

[5] See pp. 184-186.

We are about to discover how, by effectively arranging the subordinate elements of the sentence, we may achieve *variety* in our style.

With the exception of appositives and appositive phrases, the sentence elements with which we shall deal are modifiers: simple adjectives and adverbs; adjectival and adverbial clauses; and phrases—especially participial and prepositional phrases.

In the following sentence the subject and verb, together with their modifiers, are arranged in a usual and normal order:

adjs.	*subject*	*participial phrase*	*verb*	*adv.*	*prep. phrase*
The old	horse,	switching his tail,	walked	slowly	down the path.

But there are many other ways in which we can arrange these elements—for example:

1. Switching his tail, the old horse walked slowly down the path.
2. Switching his tail, slowly the old horse walked down the path.
3. Slowly the old horse walked down the path, switching his tail.
4. Down the path the old horse slowly walked, switching his tail.
5. Down the path slowly walked the old horse, switching his tail.

Which of these arrangements is preferable? The question is difficult to decide, for two reasons: first, the factor of individual taste plays a large part in the decision, and second, the arrangement may well depend upon the context.

Considering these arrangements apart from their context, however, we can make three general observations. In the first place, the elements at the beginning and end of the sentences receive the most emphasis. Second, the cadence is important. Read the sentences aloud. Do not the fourth and fifth sentences best convey the impression of the old horse's slow walk? Finally, elements transposed from their normal position in the sentence tend to stand out prominently. For example, the position of *slowly* in the second illustration, and the inversion of the subject and verb in the fifth, lend emphasis, respectively, to the words *slowly* and *walked*. Some readers might consider the fifth sentence too stylistic and labored to be effective, and indeed there is a danger that by studying arrangement we may become too self-conscious and artificial. But the danger is not so great as that produced by the opposite extreme—a humdrum and stereotyped arrangement for every sentence that we write.

So that we may consider the question from a more practical standpoint, let us examine the sentences below. First we see the crude arrangement, in which the modifiers (enclosed in parentheses) are presented without any regard to effective order. Then we see these elements arranged by the author in his finished sentence.

> *Not arranged:* As I come in from a walk (beside the river, lonely), the sun (red) flares (behind leafless elms and battlemented towers); a veil (of drifting smoke, thin, blue in the golden light) hangs (above the chimney tops).
>
> *Arranged:* The sun flares red behind leafless elms and battlemented towers as I come in from a lonely walk beside the river; above the chimney tops hangs a thin veil of drifting smoke, blue in the golden light.[6]—A. C. BENSON
>
> *Not arranged:* An apple tree (the last of an ancient line that once marked the boundary between the upper and lower pastures) stands (nearly half a mile away, beyond the meadow, yet in sight from my window).
>
> *Arranged:* Beyond the meadow, nearly half a mile away, yet in sight from my window, stands an apple tree, the last of an ancient line that once marked the boundary between the upper and lower pastures.[7]—DALLAS LORE SHARP

We can well afford to study these sentences with extreme care, noting each author's arrangement. We can be sure that the sentences were carefully composed to create a deliberate effect. What part does arrangement play in attaining the effect? What details are emphasized at the beginning and end of the sentences? Does the author's arrangement produce a cadence which helps the effect? Do any of the details stand out prominently because they are placed in unusual positions?

Exercise 42. Emphasis

Rewrite the following sentences, making them more emphatic:

1. Personally, I think he is wrong.
2. I was naturally interested in the system of education in England, my private profession being that of a university professor.
3. Joan of Arc vanquished the prosecution by using with deadly effectiveness its own testimony, not calling any witnesses of her own.
4. He inhaled the deadly fumes, thereby causing his death.

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[6] "On Growing Older," from *From a College Window.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1906.

[7] "The Edge of Night," from *The Face of the Fields.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1911.

5. At one moment he lost his fortune, his reputation, and his seat on the Stock Exchange.
6. Anarchy is by definition and by practice wasteful, whatever its ultimate wisdom.
7. I feel an impulse to go out and comfort it, to still its cries, and speak earnest words of consolation to it, when in modern books, reviews, and thoughtful magazines I read about the Needs of the Age, its Complex Questions, its Dismays, Doubts, and Spiritual Agonies.
8. We make our peace with the children by moulding them to our own image; perhaps, one of these days, we shall be wise enough to permit the children to return the compliment—for all things are possible.
9. We hire footballers and cricketers to play games for us, pugilists and soldiers to fight for us, jockeys to ride for us, singers to sing for us, and dancers to dance for us.
10. Pressing our noses on the windowpanes or dreaming our quiet dreams on the playroom floor, we would hear the heart-breaking pronouncement fall tonelessly from the lips of the Olympians, "Come children, it's time to go to bed," when the winter fires were burning their merriest in the grates or when the summer sun was melting to crimson shadows down in the western fields.
11. I am not sure of my facts, never having been in a similar situation before.
12. A student should cultivate the social life of the college because it contributes a valuable factor to his education.
13. By his infatuation for her he sacrificed his scholastic standing, his friends, and his chances of making the football team.
14. However, there is more to success than making money.
15. He was left utterly alone in the world, his wife having died while he was in Europe.
16. I am opposed to our entering into entangling alliances for various reasons.
17. There is more to the question than at first appears, I think.
18. He was forced to spend the night in his automobile, there being nothing else that he could do.
19. Mr. Forsythe closed out his business and went to live on a farm, although I cannot imagine what prompted him to do it.
20. She made up her mind to refuse him, as she wanted a career of her own.

Exercise 43. Loose and Periodic Sentences

Some of the following sentences are loose, some periodic or virtually periodic. (1) Change the loose sentences to periodic or virtually periodic sentences, and vice versa. (2) State which version you consider more effective, giving your reasons. (In some instances you may find it necessary to invent a context before you make your decision.)

1. A man is an essentially grotesque figure who clings desperately and with apoplectic puffings to these things, out of sheer inability to part from his boyhood.
2. Because cleanliness is made an essential and godliness is regarded as an offense, cleanliness is not next to godliness nowadays.
3. I saw a strange glamour in the sky not many nights ago as I was hastening through the frost.
4. If you had belonged to the court of Frederick the Great and if you had praised His Majesty's campaigns, you would have proved a poor courtier indeed.
5. Travelers from abroad can do worse than choose an enterprising gas mart on a national highway if they come to this country looking for something characteristically American in America and if they hesitate between lower Broadway, the Pullman smoker, Ringling Brothers, a quick-lunch restaurant, Chautauqua, and a night at Coney Island.
6. When they announced that they had invited a number of speakers to "felicitate and boost" the inaugural of a new mayor, the citizens of East St. Louis intended to express themselves in language appropriate to a dignified occasion.
7. The American Rhodes scholar is not likely to get in the three years of his scholarship one of the finest things which he will get from his Oxford experience.
8. Human life would remain amiable and quite adequately human if Christendom should lose everything that is now in the melting-pot.
9. When he said that to make a drama a man needed one passion and four walls, the elder Dumas enunciated a great principle.
10. Because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and to see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, to discover that I had not lived, I went to the woods.

Exercise 44. Loose and Periodic Sentences

From your reading select and copy three examples of (1) a loose sentence and (2) a periodic, or virtually periodic, sentence. Be prepared to explain why, in your opinion, each sentence is (or is not) effective.

Exercise 45. Variety in Arrangement of Elements

Study the following sentences. Arrange in what you consider the most effective order the elements contained within parentheses and brackets. (The brackets enclose modifiers, to be attached to elements already enclosed in parentheses.) In making your choices consider the following questions: the strategic use of the beginning and end of the sentence; the cadence of the sentence; and the effect obtained by departing from the usual order of elements.

1. The essay (true to its past performance) has shown (since the turn of the last century) a tendency to adapt itself to contemporary taste.
2. A sloth (like a rainbow before breakfast, an unexpected fellow breather of the air of our planet) is a surprise.
3. I found (in a cupboard, yesterday) a portmanteau (battered, small, old, which I recognized [by the initials on it] as my own).
4. Massachusetts is a man (with a face [intelligent, conscientious, hard] middle-aged, a serious man, with hair thinned by intellectual application).
5. Pennsylvania is a man, too, a man (business, well-dressed, with plenty of money in his pockets, and the consciousness of his prosperity written large on his face [smooth, indoor] and in his eyes [calculating, kindly]).
6. Virginia is a *grande dame* (dignified, with lace [fine, well-mended, ancient], white-haired, and with spoons [silver, old, thin]).
7. One may buy (often, at the grocery store, in the springtime, in these degenerate days) sassafras; but my own conviction is that it will not sparkle (after it has been listed on a grocer's yellow ticket, with its proper light).
8. A voice (seldom loud, even hesitating for the right word, of many soft vibrations that rippled now and then into humor and laughter, always measured, never monotonous nor complaining, grave in season).
9. I used to dream (once upon a time, very long ago, when I was young) of all the things I would some day possess.
10. James, Junior, was a man (wearing a pince-nez, lean, dark, showing a little white above his ears, tall).

B. PARALLELISM AND BALANCE

Parallelism and balance, as aids to clearness, have already been discussed in detail.[8] At this point we need only add that these devices are equally helpful as aids to effectiveness. The similar constructions given to parallel ideas enable the reader to grasp the thought more readily; at the same time, the instinctive pleasure he derives from the swing and rhythm of a parallel construction or a balanced sentence adds greatly to his appreciation and enjoyment of the thought. See how effective the following sentences are:

I have three chairs in my house: one for solitude, two for friendship, three for society.—HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Give money, never lend any. The giving makes ingrates only, the lending makes enemies.—ALEXANDRE DUMAS

Study is not merely the definite act of memorization; it is not merely reading and absorbing; it is not merely thinking. It is the bringing of a welter of ideas into orderly cohesion; it is the systemization of apparently incoherent, but related facts; it is the building up of divergent but component elements into a body, and the infusing of that body with the breath of life. It is making lifelike what would otherwise be dead; it is making glow with ruddy fire that which would otherwise be a dull spark; it is the vitalization of drudgery by a vision, at the beginning of the effort, of that drudgery in its relation to human activity.[9]—Howard Bement. (Note that climactic order is also employed.)

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[8] See pp. 188-193.

C. ECONOMY

Polonius. What do you read, my lord?
Hamlet. Words, words, words.

How many instructors, after reading a student theme, have not paraphrased Hamlet in language not always so temperate?

Verbosity, the use of more words than are necessary, is caused by lack of experience, an inadequate vocabulary, or by hazy thinking—often by a combination of these three faults.

Inexperience can be cured by practice, especially if we take pains to revise carefully everything that we write. The student who tends to use too many words to express a simple idea should give his composition a separate reading to detect and overcome this fault. He should prune each sentence carefully, cutting out the dead wood which saps the vitality of the thought he is trying to express.

The problem of building up a vocabulary will be dealt with in a later section of this chapter.

Hazy thinking is difficult to overcome. It is not the purpose of this book to teach the art of thinking, but every instructor will agree that clear thinking is the first requisite of clear writing. Unless the writer knows exactly what he means, how can he hope to state his idea clearly and simply? The wordy sentence is the symptom of the "wordy" mind which is either lazy or incapable of discriminating between relevant and irrelevant, essential and non-essential ideas.

The tired instructor, on laying down a wordy theme, asks himself dazedly, "What did that student mean? What did he really say?" One of the author's boyhood teachers, Dr. Alfred G. Rolfe, best conveyed the instructor's emotions by describing his own sensations when eating prune soufflé! "I take a bit on my spoon," he said. "Then I look down at my waistcoat, and if it isn't there, I know I've swallowed it."

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[9] *Old Man Dare's Talks to College Men.* New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1922.

The recipe for word-soufflé is words, words, and more words. The dish, as finally served on the instructor's table, is this:

> My faults in the use of and abuses to the King's English were unfortunately many.
>
> (The writer simply meant, "I made many mistakes in English.")
>
> The emotion and description presented by Wordsworth by the use of the same rhythmical form all the way through could never be brought out by any other form as well as presented in blank verse.
>
> (Translated, this seems to mean: No meter except blank verse could so well have conveyed the emotion of Wordsworth's descriptive passages.)

If we examine our word-soufflé more carefully, we shall find certain ingredients which we may classify.

1. General wordiness.

a. The unnecessary use and the overuse of *there* and *it* as expletives.[10]

Examples: Wordy: There are comparatively few portraits in this exhibition that are by no means notable as artistic interpretations.[11]

Improved: Most of the portraits in this exhibition are notable artistic interpretations.

Wordy: But since *there remains* the fact that *there are* three groups, the courses should be carefully arranged.

Improved: But since there are three groups, the courses should be carefully arranged.

b. A tendency to express action indirectly by means of nouns and gerunds instead of by simple, direct verbs.

Examples: Wordy: It is an old story that *has had frequent occurrence* in the history of man.

Improved: It is an old story that has frequently *occurred* in the history of man.

Wordy: The most valuable lesson of all is *the making* of important social contacts and *learning* the importance of *understanding* and *toleration* of others.

Improved: The most valuable lesson of all is *to make* important social contacts and *to learn* that it is important *to understand* and *tolerate* others.

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[10] See p. 65 and n. 3.

[11] This sentence also illustrates the confusion caused by the use of the double negative. (See p. 214.)

c. The use of *and* and *or* to add synonyms for a word which the author fears to be inexact.

Examples: Wordy: This "system of observation" was the theory that the student would write perfectly *and* correctly by simply studying *or* gleaning the very correct *and* formal writings of authors who were studied in the various classes at that time.

Improved: This "system of observation" proceeded on the theory that the student would write *correctly* by *studying* in class the very *formal* works of certain authors.

d. The use of a relative clause instead of a more compact expression.

Examples: Wordy: There are a great many hobbies *which are inexpensive but which still retain their educating and entertaining elements.*

(Note also the *there*-expletive construction.)

Improved: A great many hobbies are *inexpensive, yet educational and entertaining.*

e. General indirection, especially the weak use of the passive voice.[12]

Examples: Wordy: You will see from this specimen of my work that there is a *great deal of work to be done* in the way of *the improving of* my self-expression and logical thinking.

(Note also the *there*-expletive construction and the use of the gerund phrase [*in the way of improving*] instead of the more direct infinitive [*to improve*].)

Improved: From this specimen of my work you will see that *I must work hard to improve* my self-expression and logical thinking.

2. **"Prepositionitis."** One fault is so persistent that it demands special treatment. We shall call it "prepositionitis"—the excessive use of prepositions. As its name suggests, it is a disease with some writers. The only cure is to revise one's sentences rigidly, keeping this one fault in mind. The disease can best be described by citing a few examples:

> The frequent search *for* synonyms, *in* the course *of* my work *as* a translator, has been very beneficial *from* the point *of* view *of* increasing my knowledge *of* words.

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[12] See pp. 96, 203.

Individual study is not elastic enough *to* enable the student *to* use his mind *to* the extent *to* which he is able, nor *to* permit him *to* enlarge his view *of* the subject *beyond* the narrow limit that the book covers.

Strachey describes Florence Nightingale *as* a senile lady who receives the Order of Merit *in* a manner totally opposed *to* the one *in* which she would have received it *in* the days *in* which she had earned it.

Of all the prepositions *with* is the worst offender. Note the following:

My attention was drawn to a huge white sign *with* snow and icicles.

The second year went by in much the same manner, *with* a more advanced book of literature.

The poem is written in iambic tetrameter, *with* the last line of each stanza possessing only two feet.

3. **Jargon.** Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch has written an essay on "Jargon" which should be read by everyone who wishes to learn to write a straightforward English sentence.[13] Jargon he defines as "that infirmity of speech—that flux, that determination of words to the mouth, or to the pen—which, though it be familiar to you in parliamentary debates, in newspapers, and as the staple language of Blue Books, Committees, Official Reports, I take leave to introduce to you as prose which is no prose."

The two main vices of Jargon, as Sir Arthur lists them, are, first, that it uses circumlocution instead of short straight speech; second, that it habitually chooses vague, woolly, abstract nouns rather than concrete ones. He records the now famous example: "In the case of John Jenkins deceased the coffin provided was of the usual character." Of this sentence he says, "Now this is not accurate. 'In the case of John Jenkins deceased,' for whom a coffin was supplied, it is wholly superfluous to tell us that he is deceased. But actually John Jenkins never had more than one case, and that was the coffin. The clerk [who wrote the sentence] says he had two—a coffin in a case; but I suspect the clerk to be mistaken, and I am sure he errs in telling us that the coffin was of the usual character; for coffins have no character, usual or unusual."

As a precaution, Sir Arthur lists certain dangerous words which are apt to betray us into writing Jargon. Some of these have been included in the following list of words and expressions which should be avoided:

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[13] "On Jargon," from *On the Art of Writing.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916.

case, instance, character, nature, condition, persuasion, degree—as, *His work was of an interesting nature. The accident occurred through the hidden character of the by-road.*

from the point of view of
in respect to, in regards to
along (in) the line of, along these lines
in the capacity of,
in the way of
as to, relative to
to the extent of

4. **Tautology.** Tautology is the needless or useless repetition of the same idea in different words. Such sentences as the following are tautological. "He went about in *social society.*" "The house was *completely surrounded on all sides* by shrubbery." "The noise of the crickets is *audible to the ear.*"

Exercise 46. Wordiness

Rewrite the following sentences, stating each idea concisely:

1. The next year he had better results with regard to passing his examinations.
2. Pity the poor student, who has no chance of deception with all the learned professors directing their eagle eyes on his every movement.
3. There is little doubt in my mind that a drive to stimulate remodeling could be successfully conducted through radio by the presentation of an architect during the time allowed for the program as the best insurance of satisfactory results.
4. My high school days were but a little more fruitful in respect to my gaining a knowledge of English. My only success was in the line of a few short stories.
5. I have been specializing along a branch of mechanical engineering.
6. The classes in which all the groups should be together are those which deal with the social world as a whole and study the problems of these groups in regard to the bearing one group has to another.
7. It is not commonly understood how the Supreme Court happened to rule against the Government relative to this matter.
8. There are not many of us who read something that we know will not interest us.
9. The students I have in mind are those who are bent on acquiring an education along lines which will benefit them economically.
10. Physiology teaches the student the essential facts relative to the structure and function of the human body.
11. I am employed at Western Union in the capacity of stenographer.
12. They are working with the idea of helping society uppermost in their minds.

13. With the great resources and consuming ability this country has, the factories should work overtime.
14. I entered Business High School with stenographic and secretarial training as my chief objective.
15. Italy has drawn up an elaborate system of evacuation of city populations to go into effect on the declaration of war.
16. The only time in my first twelve years of schooling that I received any teaching on service to the community was in my last year of high school under the "Problems of American Democracy" course.
17. His criticism is never of a constructive nature.
18. My employer noticed my shortcomings along these lines.
19. The most valuable lesson of all is the making of important social contacts and learning the importance of understanding and toleration of others.
20. If the parents are discussing interesting subjects, it is bound to have a marked impression on the children, as most children are curious and willing to learn when the subject is discussed in an interesting way.
21. The simple thought is carried along easily with every activity of the character fully explained by Robinson's well selected adjectives.
22. It is only barely possible that the author could have lived all of his life other than in a small rural town and still have written the lines that he did.
23. His use of words gives the reader a vision or feeling practically the same as the author had or felt, or thought that the characters had or felt.
24. The poem is written in iambic tetrameter with the last line of each stanza possessing only two feet.
25. Something had to be done with only a minute to play.
26. The characters should not be taken seriously as to their actions.
27. We often ask the question of whether life has a real meaning.
28. Stephen's mother is of a sensitive type.
29. The relations between the two were of a very practical nature.
30. This softened his heart to the extent of tears.

D. VARIETY

To say that variety is the spice of life is to utter a platitude, but to say that variety is the spice of sentences is to state a principle that is often overlooked. How a monotonous cadence is produced and how to remedy it is our next problem.

1. Variety in sentence construction. We have already seen that sentences may be classified, according to their construction, as simple, complex, compound, and compound-complex.[14] A study of superordination, subordination, and coördination has shown us how ideas may be combined to show their relative importance.[15] This ground we need not traverse again. But whereas we formerly looked at the question as it affected the individual sentence, we are here interested in the effect produced by a series of sentences.

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[14] See pp. 121-122.

Let us take two examples:

> The combination of this game with my particular Dean was bound to be terrible. So I had other thoughts than those for the mellow tints in Bagley Wood when I climbed Boar's Hill that sunny afternoon. Nor did the Dean's house reassure me. If it had been castellated and battlemented like some of the nightmares of North Oxford, I should not have minded. But it was all too sweet and lovely in its low, cottage attractiveness; it even had hearts cut out of its pea-green blinds. It is in such houses that murders are done.[16]—Robert P. Tristram Coffin

The sentences are respectively simple, complex, simple, complex, compound, and complex. Let us compare this with another passage:

> Chemistry has always been to me a very interesting subject. I enjoy delving into the composition of all substances. One evening during my last year in high school I sat in my room working chemical problems. Near-by sat my friend, Jack Smith, working on the same subject. We were to compare our results. Jack had been quiet for some time. He seemed to be getting along better than usual with his equations. Finally he looked up and said, "What do you think of this?" He handed me a diagram of a football play he had worked out. I handed it back to him and said, "It looks very good, but it won't get you very far in chemistry."
> —Student Theme

Every sentence except the last two is a simple sentence.

Now let us experiment with reading the two passages aloud. We will notice at once that the first passage reads more smoothly; it is characterized by none of the jerkiness and monotony which, in the second, produces a sing-song effect.

Now take a pencil. In the same passages, reprinted again below, accent marks identify the syllables on which a natural stress falls. Read the passages aloud again, tapping your desk with the pencil every time you read an accented syllable.

> The combinátion of thís gáme with mý partícular Dean was boúnd to be térrible. So I had óther thoúghts thán thóse for the méllow tínts of Bágley Wóod when I clímbed Boár's Híll that súnny afternoón. Nór did the Déan's hóuse reassúre me. If it had been cástellated and báttlemented

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[15] See pp. 171-179.

[16] "The Dean's Croquet," from *A Book of Crowns and Cottages*. New Haven: The Yale University Press, 1925.

like some of the nightmares of North Oxford, I should not have minded. But it was all too sweet and lovely in its low cottage attractiveness; it even had hearts cut out of its pea-green blinds. It is in such houses that murders are done.

Notice how a general cadence marks the passage. The beat is not the *anticipated* regular stress which characterizes the meter of poetry; yet it does move in tempo with the idea which the author is presenting at the moment. Notice, for example, the contrast between the two ideas at the end of the passage; the rhythm of the first is almost lilting, attuned to the pea-green blinds. The last sentence has a heavy beat in keeping with the vengeful feeling of the author.

Now let us read the second example in the same way.

Chemistry had always been to me a very interesting subject. I enjoy delving into the composition of all substances. One evening during my last year in high school I sat in my room working chemical problems. Near-by sat my friend, Jack Stanley, working on the same subject. We were to compare our results. Jack had been quiet for some time. He seemed to be getting along better than usual with his equations. Finally he looked up and said, "What do you think of this?" He handed me a diagram of a football play he had just worked out. I handed it back to him and said, "It looks very good, but it won't get you very far in chemistry."

The monotony of the beat becomes at once apparent.

Although the variety of cadence in a passage depends to a large extent upon our choice of words (for example, substitute *committed* for *done* as the last word in Coffin's passage and notice the difference), the variety of sentence structure also plays a major role.

To understand this aspect of effectiveness one must experiment in both reading and writing. But the results justify the trouble.

2. **Variety in sentence length.** The problem of sentence length is closely allied with that of variety, which we have just considered. A short sentence is usually simple; longer sentences are apt to be complex, compound, or compound-complex.

Hence length and structure should be studied together. The visual and aural effect of a short (simple) sentence produces one impression upon the reader; longer and more complicated sentences produce other impressions.

In the following passages, study the effects of long and short sentences:

a. Long sentences:

> It became needful, then, to watch for and treasure incidents that were sharply dramatic or poignant, moods that were clear and definite, pictures that created a single clean impression. The tower of Memorial seen across the quiet marshes against the cool pink sky of evening; the sweep of a shell under the bridge and the rush of the spectators to the other rail to watch the needle-bow emerge, and the bent, brown backs of the crew; the chorus girls, still rubbing the paint from their cheeks with a tiny handkerchief wrapped over the forefinger, coming out of a stage entrance into the snow; the first sharp impression of a book just read or a play just seen—these were the things we cherished, for these we could put on a page of paper with a beginning, a middle, and an end, and with some show of vividness.[17]—Walter Prichard Eaton

b. Short sentences:

> Oxford is a noble university. It has a great past. It is at present the greatest university in the world; and it is quite possible that it has a great future. Oxford trains scholars of the real type better than any other place in the world. Its methods are antiquated. It despises science. It has professors who never teach and students who never learn. It has no order, no arrangement, no system. Its curriculum is unintelligible. It has no present. It has no state legislature to tell it how to teach, and yet—it gets there.[18]—Stephen Leacock

c. Long and short sentences:

> So far am I from withholding possessions from others, that as I walked down Bond Street the other day and paused at this window and that, filled with exquisite jewels and enameled boxes and other trifles, I thought how delightful it would be to be rich enough to buy them all—not to own them, but to give them away. To women for choice; to one woman for choice.[19]—E. V. Lucas

Note how the mood or thought of the writer is mirrored by the cadence and movement of his style. The tempo of each passage reflects his feeling. Walter Prichard Eaton is recalling his theme-writing days at Harvard; as he looks back, he slowly recalls disjointed pictures and impressions, and his long sentences reflect his slowly drifting mood. Stephen Leacock, on the other hand, is facetiously presenting a series of short, quick, and apparently paradoxical ideas. E. V. Lucas, in his first sentence, is slowly building up an impression in order that he may spring a surprise in his second, short sentence.

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[17] "The Daily Theme Eye," from W. M. Tanner, *Essays and Essay-Writing.* Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1917. L. & C., p. 106.

[18] "Oxford as I See It," from *My Discovery of England.* New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1922.

[19] *Adventures and Enthusiasm.* New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1920.

We shall not be able, at once, to show results in our study of variety. Such skill accumulates slowly, and improvement is often imperceptible. But this is certain: our practice will eventually produce rich returns on our expenditure of time and effort.

One final word of advice would not be amiss: we should not pay too much attention to variety while we are writing our first draft. We shall find it more feasible to concentrate on what we are trying to say than on how to say it. On our subsequent revisions, however, we can call into play what we have studied, and can experiment freely in making our sentences, by their variety, reflect the thought or mood which we are trying to convey.

Exercise 47. Variety in Sentence Length

The following sentences have been adapted from the works of well-known authors. The length of the sentences has been changed; some long sentences in the author's version have been broken up into short sentences, and vice versa. Rewrite each sentence, lengthening, shortening, or combining it with other sentences, keeping in mind the sense of the passage and the tempo of the author's thoughts or feelings. To achieve the desired effect you may find it necessary to delete, add, or change connectives—coördinating and subordinating conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the like.

1. The rain flashed across the midnight window with a myriad feet, and there was a groan in outer darkness, the voice of all nameless dreads. The nervous candle-flame shuddered by my bedside, the groaning rose to a shriek, and the little flame jumped up in a panic and nearly left its white column. Out of the corners of the room swarmed the released shadows, and black spectres danced in ecstasy over my bed. I love fresh air. But I cannot allow it to slay the shining and delicate body of my little friend the candle-flame, the comrade who ventures with me into the solitudes beyond midnight; and so I shut the window.[20]—Adapted from H. M. Tomlinson
2. The stillness was so profound that he heard a little animal twittering somewhere near by under the snow. It made a small frightened *cheep* like a field mouse. He wondered languidly if it were hurt and then he

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[20] "Bed-books and Night Lights," from *Old Junk*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1923.

understood that it must be in pain: pain so excruciating that he seemed, mysteriously, to feel it shooting through his own body; so he tried in vain to roll over in the direction of the sound and stretched his left arm out across the snow. And now it was as though he felt rather than heard the twittering; it seemed to be under his palm, which rested on something soft and springy, but the thought of the animal's suffering was intolerable to him, and he struggled to raise himself, and could not because a rock, or some huge mass, seemed to be lying on him. But he continued to finger about cautiously with his left hand. He thought he might get hold of the little creature and help it. All at once he knew that the soft thing he had touched was Mattie's hair and that his hand was on her face.[21]—Adapted from EDITH WHARTON

3. The steersman dug his paddle into the stream. He held hard with stiffened arms. His body was thrown forward. The water gurgled aloud. Suddenly the long straight reach seemed to pivot on its center. The forests swung in a semicircle. The slanting beams of sunset touched the broadside of the canoe with a fiery glow. This threw the slender and distorted shadows of its crew upon the streaked glitter of the river. The white man turned to look ahead. The course of the boat had been altered at right-angles to the stream. The carved dragon-head of its prow was pointing now at a gap in the fringing bushes of the bank. It glided through. It brushed the overhanging twigs. It disappeared from the river like some slim amphibious creature leaving the water for its lair in the forests.[22]—Adapted from JOSEPH CONRAD
4. Whatever possessed the bird to strike its talons deep into the neck and back of this anaconda, none but the owl could say. But from then on the story was written by the combatants and their environment, for the snake, like a flash, threw two coils around the bird, wings and all. It clamped these tight with a cross vise of muscle, and the tighter the coils compressed the deeper the talons of the bird were driven in. But the damage was done with the first strike. If owl and snake had parted at this moment, neither could have survived, for it was a swift, terrible, and short fight since the snake could not use its teeth and the bird had no time to bring its beak into play. There in the night, with the lapping waves of the falling tide only two or three feet away, the two creatures of prey met. They fought and died, in darkness and silence. They were locked fast together.[23]—Adapted from WILLIAM BEEBE
5. You watch the great white cliff. From the foot of it the glacier flows—seven miles away, but it seems two. You will sometimes see a little puff of silvery smoke go up, thin. Then it vanishes, and a few seconds later comes the roar of terrific distant thunder, for it was an avalanche.[24]—Adapted from RUPERT BROOKE

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[21] *Ethan Frome.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919.

[22] "The Lagoon," from *Tales of Unrest.* New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1916.

[23] "A Chain of Jungle Life," from *Jungle Days.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1925.

[24] *Letters from America.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916.

E. DICTION

1. The exact word:

a. The use of the dictionary. The dictionary is the source of all authoritative information regarding words—their pronunciation, part of speech, derivation, definition, and usage. Before we begin the study of words it is necessary for us to know how to read correctly an entry in an unabridged dictionary. Here so much information has been condensed and abbreviated that our first intelligent move should be to read the explanatory notes and table of abbreviations which the editors provide, usually in the fore part of the volume. The present discussion is intended to be only an introduction to this reading, which the student should perform for himself.

Dictionary entries usually list information in the following order (for the purpose of simplicity and uniformity *Webster's New International Dictionary* [2nd edition] has been followed):

1. The vocabulary entry
2. The pronunciation, including accents and phonetic spelling, a key to which appears at the bottom of each page
3. The part of speech, abbreviated and printed in italics (For all abbreviations consult the list of abbreviations, which may be found by referring to the table of contents.)
4. The inflectional forms—that is, the plurals of nouns, principal parts of verbs, and the comparative and superlative forms of adjectives, when these forms are irregular—printed in small capitals
5. The etymology, or derivation, printed in square brackets (For a detailed discussion see pp. 244-251.)
6. The classification of verbs as transitive or intransitive.
7. The definition itself
8. Usage labels, frequently added in abbreviated form to signify whether the word is archaic, obsolete, slang, colloquial, dialectal, etc. (See pp. 251-252.)
9. Synonyms (if there are any for the word), often accompanied by a discussion of words that are improperly confused
10. Antonyms, words of opposite meaning (if there are any)
11. Miscellaneous information

For example, *Webster's New International Dictionary* (2nd edition) contains the following entry under the word *disdain* (the numbers in brackets refer to the classifications made in the preceding paragraph):

1] **dis·dain'** [2] (dĭs·dān'), [3] *v.*; [4] –DAINED' (–dānd'); –DAIN'ING. [5] [ME. *disdaynen, desdainen,* fr. OF. *desdeignier* (F. *dédaigner*), fr. (assumed) VL. *disdignare,* for L. *dedignari.* See DEIGN.] [6] *Transitive:* [7] **1.** To think unworthy; to deem unsuitable or unbecoming; to look with scorn upon.

2. To reject as unworthy of oneself, or as not deserving one's notice; to scorn to accept, perform, recognize, etc.

> When offers are *disdain'd,* and love deny'd. *Pope.*

3. [8] *Obs.* [7] **a** To treat with contempt or scorn. To incite to scorn or anger; to offend.

——, [6] *Intransitive:* [7] **1.** To feel disdain.

2. To take offense. [8] *Obs.*

[9] **Syn.**—Contemn, scorn. See DESPISE. [10] **Ant.**—See DESPISE.

b. Denotation and connotation. For our choice of words, however, we cannot rely solely on the dictionary. Even such helpful works as dictionaries of synonyms and antonyms, or *Roget's Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases,* do not enable us to discriminate between one word and another when we wish to make precise distinctions. For in choosing our words we must be governed by two considerations—the denotation of the word and its connotation. The denotation is the actual meaning, as given in the dictionary. The connotation is a secondary meaning which the word subtly suggests or implies, a quality which we might best describe as "atmosphere," or association. An illustration will be helpful.

Under the entry *home* the dictionary lists as synonyms *abode* and *domicile.* But it is obvious at once that the words cannot be used interchangeably. To almost every one of us *home* suggests something more than such a literal definition as "one's own dwelling place." Associations have crystallized about the word so that the very mention of *home* calls up pictures, memories, and emotions which fill the word with an especial meaning. We could not say, "I am going to my *abode* (or *domicile*) for Christmas." On the other hand, *abode* may have for us a different connotation; it carries with it the connotation of *abiding,* and has a flavor that seems to make it more appropriate in a passage like the following, taken from Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard":

> No further seek his merits to disclose,
> Or draw his frailties from their dread *abode* . . .
> (There they alike in trembling hope repose)
>   The bosom of his father and his God.

The word *domicile* has still another connotation for us. We seldom see it employed except in its legal and technical sense: "a residence at a particular place accompanied with an intention to remain there for an unlimited time." A mining engineer might take up a *domicile* in South Africa, but he seldom would expect to make his *home* there.

Let us take another example. The word *hotel* is defined by Webster as "a house providing lodging and usually meals for the public, especially for transients; an inn." The same authority defines an *inn* as "a public house for the lodging and entertainment of travelers or wayfarers for a compensation; a hotel; a hostelry." A *hostelry* is defined as a "lodginghouse," and a *lodginghouse* as "a place where lodgings are provided and let." On the other hand, a *public house* means, in a general sense, "any inn or hotel"; in British usage it refers to any house where intoxicating liquors are sold by retail, to be consumed on the premises. And so we might continue our search to include *tavern, boardinghouse, caravansary,* or even *tourist camp*. Turning aside for a moment from the literal definitions, or denotations, let us consider each word separately, noting the associations that spring to mind when the word is mentioned. The word *hotel* may suggest to us a building located in a city; *inn* we associate with more rural and informal surroundings; *lodginghouse* has a British flavor, which, along with its American counterpart, *boardinghouse,* may conjure up pictures of ill-lit rooms and spotted tablecloths; *public house* we may have encountered in our reading of British novels and calls to mind the common contraction, "pub." Certainly these "synonyms" are not interchangeable; our choice would be determined by the flavor which we wish to communicate.

One final example will suffice. Under what circumstances would we use the synonyms *teach, tutor, school, train, enlighten?* Would we *enlighten* a private pupil? Would we *tutor* a dog to do tricks? Could we, accurately speaking, *school* an African savage in the Christian religion?

The connotations which we give to words depend upon several factors. First, there are the general associations which a majority of people have with the word in question. Almost everyone forms the same type of mental picture, or experiences similar emotions, at the mention of such words as *knight, flood, catty,* and *store.* Second, there are particular associations which we, as individuals, have formed. Here the atmosphere which we feel may be the result of influences of which we are no longer aware; our attraction or antipathy for the word may be entirely subconscious. For one of us the word *communist* may suggest a wholly admirable person who, feeling sincerely the evils of the capitalistic system, is laboring by peaceful means to bring about a new social order; to another person, who has deep-seated associations of another sort, the mention of the word may call up a picture of a bearded Russian, dripping with blood. This rather extreme example may suggest that words must be used with great care. Not only must we consider our own reaction to them, but we must attempt to anticipate what will be the effect upon a majority of our listeners or readers.

Finally, there is a third factor which determines the connotations of words—etymology, a study of the origin and derivation of the word. This consideration we will take up in some detail in the following section.

Exercise 48. Connotation

Consult an unabridged dictionary for the definitions of the following words. (1) List at least three synonyms for each word. (2) Briefly explain the connotation of each synonym. (3) Illustrate that connotation in an original sentence.

angry, bad, decision, diligence, education, general (adjective), *idea, responsible, separate* (adjective), *wise* (adjective).

Exercise 49. Synonyms

Find three words in general use which do not have synonyms. Compose an original sentence in which each word is used correctly.

Exercise 50. Synonyms

Listed below are groups of approximate synonyms, followed by sentences containing blanks. After consulting an unabridged dictionary insert in each blank the word which most exactly fits the meaning of the sentence. In making your decisions take into consideration (1) the derivation of each word—whether its Saxon or classical origin best suits the context of the sentence; (2) the denotation and connotation of the various synonyms; (3) the standard of usage (*e.g.,* whether literary or colloquial) which the context demands. Consult also any discussions of synonyms which you may find under the entries in the dictionary.

1. *respect, regard, revere, venerate, esteem, defer to, approve of, pay tribute to, worship, honor.*

   (a) The Chinese __________ their ancestors. (b) A good son will __________ his parents' wishes. (c) Americans __________ the Declaration of Independence. (d) His colleagues __________ him highly. (e) His employer __________ him as a satisfactory workman. (f) A good citizen __________ the laws of the land. (g) School children are taught to __________ the name of George Washington. (h) I do not always __________ his actions, but I am, nevertheless, very fond of him. (i) The principal speaker at the memorial service will __________ the deceased. (j) The King will __________ him by making him a Knight of the Garter.

2. *poor, indigent, poverty-stricken, impecunious, broke, straightened, embarrassed, insolvent, impoverished.*

   (a) The Duke's __________ son was always trying to borrow money from his friends. (b) The court declared the corporation __________ (c) When he approached the cashier for a loan, he was reluctantly forced to admit that he was __________. (d) After paying the hospital bill he found himself __________ in his circumstances. (e) The flood and famine left many families __________. (f) The Community Chest each year assists many __________ people. (g) "When I finally hit New York," he said, "I was __________." (h) He included both the __________ and the rich among his friends. (i) Never had I seen such __________ families as I found huddled together in that tenement.

3. *Co-operation, concurrence, connivance, complicity, combination, collusion, conspiracy.*

   (a) His rivals entered into a __________ to ruin his business. (b) The judge suspected __________ between the witnesses. (c) The society requested the __________ of all its members in launching the campaign. (d) Even rival companies were in __________ regarding a future plan of action. (e) The politician made the fraudulent contract in __________ with the local authorities. (f) The local merchants entered into a __________ to safeguard their common interests. (g) The criminal was suspected of __________ in the plot.

4. *Try, essay, endeavor, tackle, attempt, venture, undertake, strive, stake.*

   (a) "Thrice he __________(ed), and thrice in spite of scorn
   Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth." [MILTON]

   (b) Earnestly __________ to do the work which your hands shall find to do. (c) The born gambler is willing to __________ his entire fortune on the turn of a card. (d) He who __________ nothing can have little hope of winning. (e) To __________ the impossible is one indication of greatness. (f) John is the kind of person who is willing to __________ any problem that is put up to him. (g) To __________ against one's weaknesses is to build character. (h) He was not willing to __________ a task unless he felt that he could accomplish it. (i) The only way to succeed is to __________.

5. *Different, divergent, diversified, variegated, various, distinct.*
   (a) In each __________ country that he visited he observed that local customs were widely __________. (b) There was a __________ assortment of people at the reception. (c) The scenery in the western part of the United States is __________. (d) Each member of the committee held his own individual and __________ view. (e) The market place presented a __________ assortment of colors.

6. *True, exact, authentic, precise, nice, reliable, correct, genuine, accurate.*
   (a) His facts are startling, but I am afraid that his source is not __________. (b) The material was made of __________ camel's hair. (c) The original document which he consulted is an __________ record. (d) He always dressed in a __________ manner. (e) A good accountant must always be __________ with his figures. (f) The law on this particular question is __________. (g) The object of this exercise is to train the student to learn the __________ meanings of words so that he can make __________ distinctions in thought. (h) The old veteran told the boy many __________ stories of the war.

7. *General, current, comprehensive, sweeping, prevalent, catholic, universal, common.*
   (a) There is a __________ story about him that I think you will enjoy. (b) A traffic accident is a __________ occurrence in a crowded city. (c) The committee made a __________ survey of sanitary conditions. (d) The minister delivered a __________ indictment of moral conditions in his parish. (e) Physicians make a __________ practice of handling many charity cases. (f) The belief in only one God is not __________. (g) The well-dressed woman will follow the __________ fashions. (h) A good critic should have a __________ taste.

8. *Caution, discretion, prudence, heed, circumspection, calculation, foresight, forethought.*
   (a) He acted with __________, having no thought for the feelings of others. (b) In times of prosperity wise investors act with sufficient __________ to guard against possible future depressions. (c) "Let him that thinketh he standeth take __________ lest he fall." [THE BIBLE] (d) A good private secretary always acts with __________ in handling her employer's affairs. (e) The quarterback threw aside all __________ in the closing minutes of the game. (f) Although not versed in drawing-room manners, she handled herself with admirable __________. (g) With an eye for future sales, he selected the title for his book after much __________.

(h) ________ is a quality highly prized by conservative business men.

9. *Succumb, yield, acquiesce in, accede to, abide by, submit.*

(a) Each student agrees to ________ the regulations of the university. (b) He is always willing to ________ the floor to the opposition. (c) The patient finally ________ after an illness of many years. (d) After having fought extradition he finally ________ to the jurisdiction of the court. (e) It was his nature to ________ the decrees of Providence. (f) He will ________ the demands of the committee, although he does not approve of their action.

10. *Thief, robber, pilferer, plagiarist, brigand, pirate, smuggler, racketeer, swindler, crook, highwayman, burglar.*

(a) He took cash from the till in driblets; he was a ________. (b) By passing off other authors' ideas as his own he proved himself a ________. (c) The ________ held up the train and took the passengers' money and jewelry. (d) The ________ entered the house stealthily while the occupants were at lunch. (e) Stage coaches used to travel in imminent danger of being held up by a ________. (f) A man who infringes the copyright of another is a ________. (g) Since the World War a new kind of terrorist has threatened the businessman—the ________. (h) The Spanish ________ is a picturesque character. (i) Customs officers are constantly on the watch against the ________. (j) A very personable ________ tried to persuade my friend to buy some worthless oil stock. (k) He exclaimed excitedly, "The guy I just pointed out to you is a plain ________!" (l) After midnight the ________ broke the window, entered the house, and stole the family plate.

Exercise 51. The Exact Word

Rewrite the following sentences, substituting exact words for those printed in italics. Make any other necessary changes in wording; preserve, however, the entire idea of the original sentence.

1. If we have at hand the facilities for *overcoming* the mysteries of life and death, science should not *withdraw* from such an investigation.
2. The arrangement is *so* that no delay is made.
3. From twelve to three o'clock I fill water glasses in a cafeteria; therefore I have the *occasion* of seeing many types of people.
4. This problem has probably caused me more headache than any one *thing*.
5. There are many facts *surrounding* this problem.
6. I want to earn a better livelihood than I would *have* without a college education.
7. I desire a knowledge of subjects outside my strict professional course; these *points come with* the cultural *side* of college.

8. The very mention of the word "sophisticated" *has* a decidedly unfavorable reaction on my mind.
9. A salesman must have a *sunny disposition* and a *cheery smile* for everyone.
10. A date will be *set upon* for the event to take place.
11. When I sing in the bathroom, my voice does not sound so *bad* as it really is.
12. There is another fault with box cameras which is easily corrected but rarely *done*.
13. The student is unfortunate who has to leave school *because of* financial difficulties. This *case* happens to many college students every year.
14. I enjoyed myself a *great deal* on the picnic.
15. We saw the *location* where the Boston Massacre took place.
16. The rain fell in a *monotonous manner*.
17. *From* the many and varied types of teachers I have had, I have chosen to write about one of the Latin *species*.
18. It gives one a *good* feeling to know that he came to college for a worthy purpose.
19. In November Nature *gives* man her last masterpiece in the flower garden.
20. But men are not equal in *the amount* of brains, good fortune, *opportunism*, and *other things along this line*.
21. It is *mentally* impossible for some girls, who are very *nice* otherwise, to *keep up* a sufficient standard of scholarship.
22. My first argument will *bring* a *large amount of* disapproval from the *masculine quarter*.
23. On paper it is difficult to give a good reason that will appeal to your *audience*.
24. The forest ranger showed us the *remarkableness* of the echo.
25. Greed is an *envious state of being* for a dignified nation like ours to *possess*.
26. Although history and literature are cultural subjects, they will help *form* my professional course.
27. It was a Saturday night, and radio stations were coming in *pretty fast* all over the dial.
28. The speed of the car is very fast and powerful *for* the *amount* of cylinders.
29. I *began* a prejudice against sophistication when I learned to know a person who was a *high-hatter*.
30. He spoke to me in *disgusting* tones.

c. Etymology. The person who is interested in words should know, too, something of the history of the language which he is employing. Short histories of the English language are available in every unabridged dictionary. The summary below will furnish only a brief introduction to the subject, but may stimulate the student to investigate for himself.

The English language resembles a huge river with many tributaries. Words from many languages have flowed into it, and some of them have so completely mingled with the current of present-day English that their sources are forgotten except by those who have the knowledge and curiosity to trace them. In spite of the fact, however, that etymology—the study of the origins and derivations of words—is a science which demands a wide background and specialized training, the layman can find amusement and profit in even a superficial knowledge of the English language. To know the historical evolution of a word will not only lend it color and atmosphere but also will help him to determine whether it has the meaning and flavor necessary to express his thought or feeling.

For most of us the dictionary is the most convenient source of knowledge. Here, within the compass of a tiny pair of brackets, is contained the result of years of research by trained etymologists. But before we can translate and interpret this information, we should not only become familiar with the more common symbols used by the etymologists (found in the table of abbreviations in the dictionary) but we should also have some knowledge of the tributaries which have fed the stream of modern English.

As the fundamentalists in religion argue that there must have been one common parent, named Adam, from whom the human race is descended, etymologists tell us that there was once a common parent language. Their assumption is justified by the resemblance we find between certain words descended from this hypothetical tongue. For example, the English word *father* was in Sanskrit *pitr;* in Greek and Latin, *pater;* in Gothic, *fadar;* in German, *vater;* and in Anglo-Saxon, *faeder.*

This ancient common language, of which no trace remains today, is called Indo-European. From it etymologists have traced eight chief streams of language, many of which have, in turn, wandered off to form what are today separate tongues. These languages are:

I. Aryan
    A. Indic (Sanskrit—various languages of India)
    B. Iranian (some languages of India; Afghan, Persian)
II. Anatolic (Armenian)
III. Thraco-Illyrian (Albanian)

IV. Balto-Slavic
    A. Slavonic (Russian, Bulgarian, Slovenian, Czech, Polish)
    B. Baltic (Lithuanian)
V. Hellenic (Greek)
VI. Italic
    A. Osco-Umbrian (language of ancient Italy)
    B. Latinian (Latin, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Rumanian)
VII. Celtic
    A. Continental (language of ancient Gaul)
    B. Insular (Welsh, Irish, Scotch)
VIII. Teutonic
    A. East (language of ancient Germany)
    B. Scandinavian (Icelandic, Swedish, Danish, Norwegian)
    C. West (High German, Low German, Dutch, Flemish, Anglo-Saxon, English)[25]

The language of the natives of Great Britain was Celtic, one of the eight streams, mentioned above, that flowed from the Indo-European tongue. A very few Celtic words survive in modern English—such as *bard* and *druid;* but one of the chief items of interest for us today is that Celtic was supposedly the language of King Arthur and his knights.

When Julius Caesar led his Roman legions into Gaul, the Latin tongue left a permanent imprint on the former language of the territory—so much so that modern French, like Italian and Spanish, is considered a Romance Language—that is, one directly derived from Latin-speaking Rome. Then, in 43 A.D., the Romans began their subjection of Britain, at that time inhabited by the Celts. Although the Romans held the country in loose subjection for five centuries, they had only a slight influence on the language of the vanquished Celts; only a few English words can be traced to the Roman influence of this period—such as *pound* (from the Latin *pondo,* a weight), *street* (from *strata via,* a paved way), and *mile* (from *milia,* i.e., *milia pasuum,* a thousand paces). It was not until missionaries came from Rome in 597 to bring Christianity to the people that Latin, as the language of the church and therefore of the scholars, effected a slightly greater change on the native speech. The influence of the early churchmen was more far-reaching in literature, for almost all the serious writing of the next thousand years was done in Latin. Even in the early part of the seventeenth century Sir Francis Bacon used the native tongue only for his *Essays,* while retaining Latin for his scholarly *Novum Organum.*

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[25] See Jessie Macmillan Anderson, *A New Study of English Words.* New York: American Book Company, 1929. This book contains a clear and readable account of the history of English, and some practical hints for building a vocabulary.

The first great influence on the native Celtic language did not come from the Latin, but from another direction. Some time during the fifth century A.D., Teutonic tribes inhabiting the country between the Baltic Sea and the Elbe River invaded and subjugated Britain. These invaders—the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes—whose vocabulary probably did not exceed two thousand words, impressed their language upon the territory which they had conquered. By the tenth century the Angles had united the weaker Saxons and Jutes to such an extent that the name of the island became Angleland, from which the names *England* and *English* are derived. The language of the people from this period until about the year 1100 we now call Anglo-Saxon, or Old English.

In 870 a series of Danish invasions had added a number of Scandinavian words to the language—such as the place-suffixes *-by* and *-thorp* (*Whitby* and *Oglethorp*). But a much more powerful influence began to make itself felt about the year 1042, with the advent of Edward the Confessor, who had spent much time in Normandy, the northern coast of the present country of France. When William the Conqueror, a Norman, defeated the English King Harold at the Battle of Hastings in 1066 and became supreme in Britain, he set up a court composed of nobles who naturally spoke Norman-French, which soon became the language of the government, fashion, business, art, and literature. At first there was a sharp division between the court and the common people, each class speaking its own language and having its own literature; the simple tales of the native Anglo-Saxons were in sharp contrast to the elaborate romances of the Normans. But gradually the barriers separating the two races broke down: the Normans, having lost their French possessions across the Channel, became imbued with a patriotic feeling for their new country; English and Norman soldiers fought side by side against their French enemies; the two races commenced to intermarry; and the development of commerce made it necessary for each race to know the language of the other. And so the Norman-French literature, which up to this time had made up the bulk of the writing in England, became infused with English words, and the Normans came more and more to use the English language. They retained, however, a great many of their own words—words which retained a flavor of elegance which contrasted strangely with their harsh-sounding Anglo-Saxon equivalents. We may see this contrast today in such words as the Anglo-Saxon *fatherly* and the Norman-French *paternal. Paternal,* which is obviously derived from the Latin word *pater,* is an example of the fact that a large number of English words of Latin extraction are in fact not derived from Latin, but from French, which stems from the Latin.

Finally, in 1362, the English language had become so prevalent and influential that a decree was promulgated that all proceedings in the law-courts should be conducted in the English language.

The literature of the upper classes, however, remained predominantly Norman-French until the great poet Chaucer (1340 [?]-1400) first dared to write in the English tongue. Wyclif's translation of the English Bible in 1380 exerted another tremendous influence. Finally, within twenty-five years of the introduction of printing by Caxton, in 1476, the entity of modern English may be considered as definitely established.

The period of Middle English, then, began about 1100, at a time when the language consisted of Anglo-Saxon, which had absorbed from its predecessors several diverse elements: a few words of Celtic, Latin, and Danish origin. To this tongue was gradually added the influential Norman-French, but in the end, climaxed by the works of Chaucer, the English language predominated over the Norman-French as a medium of both speech and literature.

By 1500 the character of English, which had resulted from the fusions which we have just mentioned, had become sufficiently fixed so that we can today read quite easily the writings of authors of the sixteenth century. Although the language continued to change—as it is still changing—these changes have been more gradual and less radical as the years have gone by. Many words have been dropped from the language, and are marked "archaic" or "obsolete" in modern dictionaries; but many also have been added, especially when, after the renewal of interest in Latin and Greek during the latter part of the fifteenth century, authors employed large numbers of words of classical origin. Our modern word *telegram,* for instance, is one illustration of the influence which Greek has exerted upon the majority of our scientific terms.

As a result of these fusions, then, we have today a language composed of many elements, all of which have felt the impress of the original Anglo-Saxon tongue. In general it may be said that the native words are shorter (frequently monosyllabic), fuller of consonants, and more homely in their connotations; the foreign words, especially the Latin and French, are longer and more musical, and are apt to convey subtleties and distinctions of thought and feeling more accurately than their ruder Anglo-Saxon synonyms. Contrast, for example, the Anglo-Saxon *love* with the French *amour,* or the Anglo-Saxon *body* with the French *corpse.* Whereas such disparate words exist side by side in the works of writers, and in the speech of most of us, a writer like Milton, who had a thorough classical education, used a large percentage of words of classical origin, whereas the more vigorous Daniel Defoe and John Bunyan utilized a vocabulary drawn largely from the Anglo-Saxon. In our modern speech we are inclined to employ native words to express our everyday wants, but when we come to deal with thoughts or emotions, we unconsciously employ Latin or French derivatives.

With even such a rough background as has just been given we can become interested in the histories of the words we use. From the dictionary we could learn that the word *tawdry* is derived from *Saint Audrey;* the term was originally applied to articles bought at the fair of Saint Audrey, at Ely, in England, where necklets, known as *Saint Audrey's laces,* or *tawdry laces,* were sold. Hence the word has come to mean *cheap* or *gaudy.*

Sometimes, again, the dictionary furnishes us only with clues, which we must run down for ourselves with the aid of the many books which are available. If, for example, we should look up the word *lumber,* Webster would refer us to "Lombard 2"—meaning the second definition under the entry "Lombard." Here we would find: "A moneylender or banker;—from the famous bankers or moneylenders of Lombardy. . . . The place of business of a Lombard; a bank; also, a pawnshop." If we were curious enough to follow up this clue, we could learn that the early Lombard bankers frequently took furniture as security for loans. By degrees the term *lumber* came to be applied to any disused goods, a meaning which is still common in England today. The American colonists employed the term to designate cut timber. The word, as we know it in America, therefore, has gone through an interesting history, which involves at least three distinct changes of meaning.

If we should look up the derivations of some of our "synonyms" for *hotel* which we have discussed (see p. 239), we should find a strange mixture of ancestry. *Hotel* is of French origin; *inn,* Anglo-Saxon. *Hostelry* came into the language from the Latin through the French; in Latin, as *hospitalis,* it was an adjective meaning *relating to a guest,* a meaning long since lost, preserved now in *hotel* and *hostel. Tavern* is of Latin origin also, coming from the word *taberna* (hut, or tavern). When the word moved from Italy to France, it became *taverne,* and finally, after having crossed the English Channel, *tavern. Caravansary,* on the other hand, is Persian in origin, derived from *kārawān* (caravan) and *sarāï* (palace).

The history of a word, then, can throw light on its connotation and help us to decide whether or not it is the exact word for our purpose. But in choosing the exact word, we must take into account another factor—usage, to be considered in the following section.

This short introduction to the study of backgrounds of words may have interested the student to investigate words for himself. Before he can do this, however, it is necessary to become acquainted with the conventions and the more common abbreviations used in the dictionary. This information may be found by referring to the explanatory notes and table of abbreviations provided by the editors.

Let us now take a sample entry from *Webster's New International Dictionary* (2nd edition):

> **boat** (bōt), *n.* [ME. *boot, bat,* fr. AS. *bāt;* akin to ON. *beit;* orig., a hollowed tree trunk; akin to L. *findere,* to cleave. ON. *bātr,* D. & G. *boot,* F. *bateau* are all ult. fr. E. . .] . . .

This information, translated, tells us that *boat* is derived from the Middle English *boot* or *bat,* which, in turn, was derived from the Anglo-Saxon *bāt.* The word was akin to the Old Norse *beit.* It originally meant a hollowed tree trunk. The word is also akin to the Latin word *findere,* meaning *to cleave.* The old Norse *bātr,* the Dutch and German *boot,* and the French *bateau* are all ultimately from the English.

Thus it is comparatively easy to trace the background of a word and to obtain information which will help us to understand both its denotation and its connotation.

Exercise 52. Derivations

Look up in an unabridged dictionary the derivations of the following words: *brummagem, buncombe, camera, chapel, clank, dialogue, eccentric, exchequer, farm, forsythia, gamut, gin, gravel, jade, jeremiad, Jimson weed, lynch, mackintosh, melodrama, mumpsimus, orientate, philosopher, poplin, religion, sacrilegious, shibboleth, spoonerism, suburban, telegram.*

d. Usage. The standard of usage is set, not by a democratic majority vote, but by the best writers and speakers. To meet the standard demanded of written English, a word must run the gauntlet of three tests of usage: it must be in *present, national,* and *reputable* use.

To be in *present use,* a word must not be archaic or obsolete. An archaic word suggests ancient times—as, *quoth* (said) or *ween* (suppose). The adjective *loath* is obsolete when used in the sense of *odious,* but is in present use when it means *unwilling*—as, *I am loath to leave you.*

To be in *national use,* a word must not be provincial; that is, it must not be restricted in use to a certain area of the country. *Poke* (bag), *calculate* (think), and *tote* (carry) are provincialisms. On the other hand, certain words called *nationalisms* meet the standard of good usage in the country in which they are used. What we properly call *baggage* in the United States, the Englishman properly calls *luggage.*

To be in *reputable use,* a word must not be a colloquialism, a slang expression, a vulgarism, or an impropriety. A colloquial word meets the standard of spoken, but not of formal written usage. The contractions *don't, hadn't,* etc., are colloquialisms. Slang, on the other hand, in spite of its wide currency, does not rise to the level of colloquialisms, while a vulgarism occupies a position at the bottom of the scale of usage—*gents,* for example, does not belong in the vocabulary of educated people who, on occasions, employ colloquialisms and slang. An impropriety differs from the other categories; it denotes the misuse of a reputable word. For example, to use the verb *transpire* in the sense of *happen* is an impropriety.

Thus language is perpetually changing. New words are constantly being introduced and other words are becoming obsolete; certain expressions, idioms, and grammatical constructions find their way into the speech and writing of a period, and, if eventually sanctioned by the best speakers and writers, meet the three tests of being present, national, and reputable. Most innovations in language are the result of need or expediency. During the last century, for example, the essayist Henry Hazlitt, feeling the lack of a word to express a certain shade of meaning, coined the word *impersonal*. The need which this word supplied was so universal that *impersonal* soon found its way into the speaking and writing vocabularies of England and America. Again, certain constructions which are, strictly speaking, ungrammatical, sometimes creep into the category of reputable use. Expressions of this type usually are accepted as good colloquial English before they finally become reputable enough to meet the literary standard. The ungrammatical "It's *me*" and "*Who* do you want?" are both already established as good colloquial English, and it is not impossible that within the present generation they may be accepted as good literary usage. The *due to* construction, already discussed,[26] will probably win its way into literary English; careful writers and speakers avoid using *due to* as an adverbial phrase, but the practical difficulties involved in differentiating between the adjectival and adverbial use are causing the adverbial use to win rapid headway.

Even the most cultured persons will, in conversation, use words and expressions which they would not commit to paper. Most writing should conform to the literary standard. As a practical matter, the student, when in doubt as to the status of a word, should consult the latest edition of a dictionary. If the word is labeled "colloquial," "slang," "dialectal," or "illiterate," he should avoid it, unless, of course, the violation is intentional and justified by circumstances.

Exercise 53. Usage

By referring to *Webster's New International Dictionary* (2nd edition) determine whether the italicized words, as used in the following sentences, are in good usage. If they are not, be prepared to state whether they are colloquial, dialectal, etc.

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[26] See pp. 199-200.

1. I had *such* a good time.
2. I was not able to *contact* him yesterday.
3. *Humans,* as a rule, are not charitable.
4. The country has not yet returned to *normalcy.*
5. My friend was not a *high-brow.*
6. I *calculate* that it will rain tomorrow.
7. I assured him that I was not *peeved.*
8. The burglar *pinched* all my money.
9. He *opined* that the Democrats would not win the election.
10. I feel only *middling* today.
11. He was a man of *middling* size.
12. The team was *game* to the end.
13. His behavior was hard to *laugh off.*
14. The carpenter made an *outside* estimate.
15. The automobile stopped at a *nearby* house.
16. The *above* is true.
17. The *above* facts are not true.
18. His actions *queered* him with the *fans.*
19. The football team *registered* another *win* on Saturday.
20. He secured his appointment through *pull.*

e. Words used loosely. We frequently fail to choose the exact word for our meaning either because our vocabulary is too slender or because we are too lazy to search for the right one. We therefore tend to use words that are so general and vague in their meaning that, like large-mouthed wastepaper baskets, they obligingly try to catch anything in the way of an idea that we may throw in their direction. One of the most abused words in English is *things,* which may mean anything we desire; the difficulty is that the reader is usually left to shift for himself to make out the meaning as best he can. Two verbs—*to be* and *to do*—are shamefully overworked. The following examples will illustrate the point:

The speaker said many *things* about war.
The public believes that the decision of the Supreme Court *is* the defeat of labor by capital.
Otherwise he might not have developed into the strong, lovable character that he *did.*

f. The concrete word. Even if a word both meets the literary standard of usage and is used exactly, it may not be the best word for our purpose. It may lack color and vitality, or it may be too vague and comprehensive for our purpose. Read the following passage, paying particular attention to the italicized words:

> Gravity, a mere nuisance to *some people, frightens others.* To the mouse and any smaller animal it presents practically no dangers. You can drop a mouse *from the height of* a thousand feet, and, on arriving at the bottom, *it is only slightly hurt. Rats, men, and horses are killed.*

The italicized words are all correctly used, but we can realize their inadequacy when we compare this passage with the original. Note how the italicized words, which are concrete and vivid, have given strength and virility to the author's idea.

> Gravity, a mere nuisance to *Christian,* was a *terror* to *Pope, Pagan, and Despair.* To the mouse and any smaller animal it presents practically no dangers. You can drop a mouse down a thousand-yard *mine shaft* and, on arriving at the bottom, it *gets a slight shock and walks away.* A rat is *killed,* a man is *broken,* a horse *splashes.*[27]

Let us compare two other passages. The first paragraph below is filled with words which we might term "comfortable" or "stuffy"; they are neither bad nor good. The second paragraph was written by an author who chose his words with care.

> Everyone knows the popular conception of Florence Nightingale. The *unselfish* woman, the *aristocratic girl* who *gave up* an *easy life* to *help* the *unfortunate,* the Lady with the Lamp, *walking* among the *unsanitary conditions* of the hospital at Scutari, and *blessing* the *dying soldiers*—the *picture* is familiar to us all.

> Everyone knows the popular conception of Florence Nightingale. The *saintly, self-sacrificing* woman, the *delicate maiden of high degree* who *threw aside* the *pleasures of a life of ease* to *succour* the *afflicted,* the Lady with the Lamp, *gliding through the horrors* of the hospital at Scutari, and *consecrating with the radiance of her goodness* the dying soldier's *couch*—the *vision* is familiar to all.[28]

The writer who wishes to use words which are concrete and specific rather than abstract and general must be willing to take pains with his writing. For only a fortunate few does the *right* word spring instinctively to mind. Patience and practice both play important parts in training. The exercise of patience will bring both tangible and intangible rewards. The burden of practice can be lightened by making it a game. Here is a practical suggestion: read over one of your compositions carefully, underlining every word which, in your opinion, is abstract, vague, general, colorless, or inaccurate. Then, with the aid of a dictionary and such a book as *Roget's Thesaurus,* substitute words which are concrete, specific, vivid, and accurate. Exercises 50 and 51 (pp. 240-244) also present problems which will aid in building a vocabulary.

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[27] J. B. S. Haldane, "On Being the Right Size," from *Harper's Magazine,* April, 1926. L. & C., p. 157.

[28] Lytton Strachey, "Florence Nightingale," from *Eminent Victorians.* New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1918. L. & C., p. 3.

2. The simple word. Our study of economy in the use of words taught us that we shall not be heard for our *much* speaking. It is equally true that we shall not be heard for our *loud* speaking.

Many people are under the impression that to write effectively one must write flamboyantly. A man who would not think of appearing on the street in a checked suit, yellow tie, and spats will, on paper, commit astonishing offenses against good taste. If he believes that the occasion calls for an emotional outburst, he will beat his rhetorical drum on the street corner in a shameless and shocking fashion. Such exhibitions are usually the result of a synthetic emotion, manufactured to fit the supposed needs of the occasion.

a. "Fine writing." "Fine writing" is flamboyant writing. The quotation marks always surround the term to soothe the feelings of the student who, thinking that he has at last achieved a masterpiece, must suffer the bitterness of disillusionment. For some reason his unsympathetic instructor has failed to appreciate the flights of his muse into the cerulean vault of the empyrean; the horned hooves of Pegasus have scaled in vain the heights of Parnassus. Gone are his hopes of achieving the distinction of the coveted "A." Crushed is his ambition which but lately soared toward the zenith.

Such an impassioned passage as the foregoing would certainly merit the sarcastic comment, "Fine writing."

b. Trite expressions. Only a genius is capable of producing a truly original thought. We ordinary mortals must content ourselves with retailing opinions which come to us largely secondhand. Familiar though an idea may be, however, it still has the distinction of being ours. Someone has undoubtedly thought of it before, but we are thinking it now; it has probably been written before, but we can write it now with some hope of achieving freshness and individuality.

Even if our idea has vitality, there is one sin which we must not commit. We must not express our idea tritely. Below will be found a list of some expressions to be avoided—not because they offend against exactness but because, like old shoes that once graced a Fifth Avenue show window, they are now, after years of long service, ready for the ash-can. Some of them, however, are more like a tired hackney horse—they need only a rest.

acid test
ardent admirer
at one fell swoop
bated breath
beggars description
brutally frank
budding genius
busy as a bee
consensus of opinion
conspicuous by his absence
dead as a doornail
depths of despair
discreet silence
doomed to disappointment
downy couch
fair sex
festive board
fill a long felt want
finger of scorn
heartfelt thanks
in closing I may add
in my humble opinion
irony of fate
light fantastic toe
method in his madness
midnight oil
nick of time
nipped in the bud
Old Sol
poor but honest
powers that be
psychological moment
sadder but wiser
sickening thud
skeleton in the closet
starry eyes
sumptuous repast
superhuman efforts
take for instance
thunderous applause
tree standing like a sentinel
untiring efforts
wave of enthusiasm
wends his way
when my ship comes in
white as snow
words cannot describe
wrapped in mystery

Of such expressions as these Charles S. Brooks has written:

> Sometimes, it is true, they seem shabby at the seam, and worn and rubbed. And yet it is usually their partnership with other words that is threadbare. An adjective and noun, like a fretting family, have been hitched together until both their backs are sore. But freed from one another for a season each regains its freshness. For words themselves—old common words—do not wear out. Let but a master use them and they shine at a dozen facets. It is the base kitchen word that is the surest timber for a sonnet, but it must divorce itself from stale and spotted company. The babble of vulgar tongues can be made the trumpet of shrewd persuasion if only its art is studied.[29]

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[29] "To Be Read Only by Serious Stupid Persons," from *A Thread of English Road*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1924.

c. Figures of speech.[30] A figure of speech is a pictorial comparison, expressed or implied, between two ideas or objects. Poetry abounds with them, and many prose writers use them with great effectiveness. Note the following illustrations:

> At times, indeed, among her intimates, Mrs. Nightingale almost wept. *"We are ducks,"* she said with tears in her eyes, *"who have hatched a wild swan."* But the poor lady was wrong; *it was not a swan that they had hatched; it was an eagle.*[31]

> Words could no longer suffice: I understood Hugo's words well enough, *the upholstery of his mind,* but it was the mind itself that escaped me.[32]

> [A description of a locomotive] Her driving-wheels stood *solid as the foundations of a church.* (I wish Euclid could have seen them.) It's not possible, the mind said, that such weights can be moved. Yet it is done, by the *dynamics of hatred.* Here are a tank of inert water, a box of *angry fire.* They damn each other by instinct, *cat and dog.* Of their indignation, *hiss and growl and spit,* those wheels make 90 miles an hour.[33]

There are several dangers which attend using figures of speech. If we are not warmed to our subject but are, on the contrary, straining to achieve an effect which we do not really feel, we are frequently tempted to fill our writing with strained or showy figures of speech, just as some women attempt to compensate for their lack of good looks or personality by overdressing. There is such a thing as a lack of good taste in writing as well as in dress. When a prominent English novelist wrote the following, he was definitely guilty of a breach of literary taste: "'No,' said Grace, and such a no! She was like a statue uttering a chip of its own marble."

Just as an artificial and self-induced emotion can lead to strained figures of speech, so also, at times, can a sincere conviction. In our enthusiasm for an idea or an impression we are often betrayed into using strained or elaborate figures which defeat the ends which they were intended to accomplish.

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[30] Some of the more common figures of speech are here defined. (1) A *simile* expresses a comparison between two ideas, frequently employing the words *as* or *like*—as, "He swims *like* a fish." (2) A *metaphor* implies a comparison between two ideas by assuming that the one *is* the other—as, "He *is* a fish when he is in the water." (3) *Personification* represents an inanimate object or abstract idea as a personality or as endowed with personal attributes—as, "Sail on, O Ship of State!" (4) *Metonomy* substitutes one idea for another closely allied to it—as, "He keeps a good *table.*" (*Table* is used instead of *food.*) (5) *Hyperbole* is extravagant exaggeration for rhetorical effect—as, "Was this the face that launched a thousand ships?"

[31] Lytton Strachey, "Florence Nightingale," from *Eminent Victorians.* New York and London: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1918. L. & C., p. 3.

[32] Vincent Sheean, *Personal History.* New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1935. L. & C., p. 57.

[33] Christopher Morley, "Broadway Limited." *The Saturday Review of Literature,* December 7, 1935. L. & C., p. 60.

d. Mixed figures of speech. There is a final danger attendant upon the use of figures of speech. Mixed figures are usually the result of absent-mindedness or inattention on the part of the writer. The following gems were taken from the writings of a prominent politician during the stress of the 1935 presidential campaign. Under the circumstances he can, perhaps, be forgiven.

> There is a deliberate attempt on the part of those other people to throw a dust cloud when they know their ship is sinking.
>
> Today there is a ferment which most astute politicians say is going to Landon. The yeast is very apparent in the home-stretch of this exciting presidential race.

3. The euphonious word. Euphonious means, literally, "well-sounding." As distinguished from cadence, or rhythm, which produces effects by means of stresses or accents, euphony relies on the sounds of the words themselves. We should attempt to choose our words for their sound as well as for their meanings; pleasing combinations of sounds aid effectiveness just as harsh and discordant combinations displease the reader.

a. Awkward repetition of sounds. English should be written so that it may be read aloud. One of the most successful means of criticizing our own work is to submit it to this experiment, wherein both sound and sense are subjected to a rigid test. We may discover some awkward repetitions of sound such as characterize the following sentences:

> A cadet from one of the high schools represented attempted to catch the horse.
>
> If you would follow my advice, the required stimulation would be acquired.

b. Awkward repetition of words. This fault is due either to carelessness or to laziness. Consider the following:

> The *poems* written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow are among the best known *poems* of the English language. His *poems* are a delight to adults and children.

As we have seen,[34] a word, intentionally repeated, may be effective; but such mistakes of repetition as the one cited are the result of carelessness and would be discovered at once if the composition were read aloud.

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[34] See pp. 17-18, 41-44.

Reading aloud, however, has more than negative value. If we read aloud from good literature and submit our own writing to comparison with it, we may acquire an "ear" for words.

F. A GLOSSARY OF FAULTY DICTION AND FAULTY IDIOMS

We have seen that there is a difference between the colloquial and literary standards of usage. In their conversation cultivated people employ words and idioms that they would not commit to paper when writing formally. While formal writing need not imply stiffness, it does demand correctness. When we reduce our thoughts or impressions to words, unless the writing be informal in tone (as in a letter or a journal), we should meet the literary, not the colloquial, standard of usage. We should be exact in our diction, correct in our use of idioms.

The following glossary contains a list of some of the words and idioms which are most commonly violated in formal writing. It is a glossary of literary, not colloquial English. Distinctions have been drawn between literary, colloquial, dialectal, and slang words and expressions, in order that the student may be able to adapt his vocabulary to his needs.

ACCEPT, EXCEPT: *accept* means *receive; except* as a verb means *exclude;* as a preposition, *but. Right:* "He *accepted* the gift." "He *excepted* her when he issued his invitations." "All came *except* her."

AFFECT, EFFECT: *affect* as a verb means *influence* or *produce an effect upon. Effect* as a noun means *result;* as a verb, *produce* or *accomplish. Right:* "The sight *affected* him." "The medicine had an *effect* upon him." "The doctor *effected* a cure."

AGGRAVATE: means *make worse,* not *vex. Right:* "The altitude *aggravated* his disease."

AGREE IN, AMONG, TO, WITH: "They could not agree *among* themselves." "We agreed *in* our views." "I agree *to* your suggestion." "He agreed *with* me in my decision."

ALIBI: Colloquial when used to mean an excuse. *Wrong:* "He offered an *alibi* for failing the test."

ALL READY: do not confuse this adjective phrase with the adverb *already.* "We were *all ready* for the picnic." "We had *already* come."

ALL THE FARTHER, FASTER: incorrect for *as far as, as fast as.*

Right: "This is *as far as* the road goes." "This is *as fast as* I dare to drive."

ALL TOGETHER: do not confuse with *altogether; all together* is an adjectival phrase; *altogether* is an adverb. *Right:* "I found my books *all together.*" "They were *altogether* spoiled."

ALMOST: See MOST.

ALRIGHT: incorrect for *all right.*

AMONG, BETWEEN: use *among* when there are more than two objects; *between* when there are only two. *Right:* "Jack and Henry had an agreement *between* them." "England, France, and Belgium made an agreement *among* themselves."

ANYMORE: incorrect for *any more.*

ANYPLACE: colloquial for *anywhere.*

ANY PLACE, NO PLACE, SOME PLACE: dialectal for *anywhere, nowhere, somewhere.*

ANYWAYS: illiterate when meaning *in any case, anyhow.*

ANYWHERES, NOWHERES, SOMEWHERES: always omit the final *s.*

APT, LIKELY, LIABLE: *apt* suggests habitual tendency; *likely* implies strong probability; *liable* implies exposure to an unpleasant contingency. *Right:* "He is *apt* to be careless." "It is *likely* to snow." "You are *liable* to get lost."

AS: dialectal when used as a synonym for *whether. Wrong:* "I do not know *as* I can come."

AWFUL: an adjective; *awfully* is an adverb. Both imply the idea of awesomeness or frightfulness. Both are slang when used loosely: "He is an *awful* bore." "I am *awfully* glad to see you."

BALANCE: is colloquial when used in the sense of *the rest, the others,* or *the remainder. Wrong:* "I shall study hard for the *balance* of the year."

BECAUSE: see REASON.

BETWEEN: see AMONG.

BUT WHAT: colloquial for *but that. Right:* "I do not doubt *but that* you are right."

CAN BUT; CANNOT BUT: *can but* means *can only*—as, "I *can but* state the rule; I cannot explain it." *Cannot but* means *cannot do otherwise than*—as, "I *cannot but* reprove you for your mistake."

CANNOT HELP BUT: a colloquial combination of two correct idioms—*cannot but* and *cannot help —ing. Right:* "I *cannot but agree.*" "I *cannot help agreeing.*"

CAPACITY OF, FOR: "The tank had a capacity *of* ten gallons." "He had a capacity *for* work."

CLAIM: colloquial when used to mean *assert* or *maintain. Wrong:* "He *claimed* that he was right."

COMMON, MUTUAL: *common* means *shared equally; mutual* means *reciprocal, interchanged.* "Jack is the *common* friend of Henry and James." "Henry and James have a *mutual* friendship."

COMPARED TO, WITH: "A book has been compared *to* a frigate." "John compared his book *with* hers to note any differences."

COMPLECTED: dialectal for *complexioned.*

CONFIDE IN, TO: "He confided *in* me." "He confided his secret *to* me."

CONTACT: is slang when used as a verb meaning to form a business or social connection. *Wrong:* "The salesman *contacted* his customers."

CONTINUAL, CONTINUOUS: *continual* means *recurrent at intervals of time; continuous* means *continuing without interruption. Right:* "*Continual* dropping wears away the stone." "*Continuous* noise is deafening."

CONTRAST WITH, TO: "He contrasted John *with* Henry (verb)." "There is a contrast *between* John and Henry (noun)." "John appeared in sharp contrast *to* his father."

COULD OF: see HAD OF.

CREDIBLE, CREDITABLE, CREDULOUS: *credible* means *believable; creditable* means *deserving credit; credulous* means *too easily inclined to believe.* "His story was *credible.*" "He made a *creditable* showing." "All children are *credulous.*"

DIFFERENT: preferably followed by *from,* not *than,* or *to*—as, "He was different *from* his fellows."

DIFFER FROM, IN, WITH: "Connecticut differs *from* Florida." "The states differ *in* their climate." "John differed *with* Henry on the matter."

DISAPPOINTED IN, WITH: "I was disappointed *in* Henry." "Henry was disappointed *with* his grades."

DISINTERESTED, UNINTERESTED: *disinterested* means not *biased by self-seeking; uninterested* means *not interested. Right:* "He was a *disinterested* critic." "He was handicapped by an *uninterested* audience."

DISTINGUISH AMONG, BETWEEN, FROM: we distinguish *among* several kinds of plants; we distinguish *between* two uses. (See AMONG.) "Man is distinguished *from* apes in intelligence." "He could not distinguish *between* red and green."

DOVE: colloquial when used as the past tense or the past participle of *dive.*

ECONOMIC, ECONOMICAL: *economic* pertains to the science of economics; *economical* means *saving*—as, "an *economic* question," "an *economical* cook."

EFFECT: see AFFECT.

ENTHUSE: colloquial.

EVERY TIME: always written as two words.

EVERYWHERES: see ANYWHERES.

EXCEPT: see ACCEPT.

EXPECT: colloquial when used to mean *suppose* or *think*. *Wrong:* "I *expect* that you are right."

FEWER, SMALLER, LESS: *fewer* (as opposed to *more*) refers to number—"fewer people." *Smaller* (opposed to *larger*) refers to size or amount—"smaller houses," "a smaller quantity." *Less* (opposed to *greater, more*) refers to degree, value, or amount—"less confusion," "less cost," "less wind."

FOLKS: usually considered colloquial for *folk, people, relatives.*

GET TO: dialectal for *to manage* or *to contrive. Incorrect:* "I did not *get to* go."

HAD OF, HAD OUGHT, SHOULD OF, COULD OF, WOULD OF, MAY OF, MIGHT OF: incorrect for *had, ought, should have, could have, would have, may have,* and *might have,* respectively.

HANG: see HUNG.

HARDLY, SCARCELY, ONLY: guard against the double negative; "I couldn't *hardly* do it." (See p. 214.)

HUNG: in referring to the death penalty *hanged* is preferred.

IDENTICAL TO: the correct idiom is *identical with.*

IMPATIENT AT, WITH: "impatient *at* the delay (thing)"; "impatient *with* her (person)."

INCREDIBLE, INCREDULOUS: see CREDIBLE.

INDIGNANT AT, WITH: "He was indignant *at* the delay (thing)." "He was indignant *with* his students (person)."

INDIVIDUAL: overworked as the loose equivalent of *person, man, woman,* etc. *Loose:* "He was a common looking *individual." Exact:* "Lincoln was an *individual."*

INSIDE OF: colloquial for *inside.*

INTERFERE IN, WITH: "He interfered *in* the work (thing)." "He interfered *with* the man (person)."

ITS, IT'S: *its* is the possessive pronoun; *it's* is a contraction of *it is.* (See also p. 67.)

JUST: colloquial in the sense of *quite* or *very*—as, "She looked *just* beautiful."

KIND, SORT: note that the phrase *"these* (*those*) *kind* (*sort*) of books" is ungrammatical. The demonstrative adjective should agree with *kind* (*sort*), not with *books. Correct: "This* (*that*) *kind* (*sort*) of book"; *"these* (*those*) *kinds* (*sorts*) of books."

KIND OF, SORT OF: (1) Colloquial when used to mean *somewhat,* or *rather*—as, "I feel *kind of* unhappy." (2) When these phrases are used with adjectival force before a noun, it is considered colloquial to insert the indefinite article *a*. *Colloquial:* "He is a strange kind of *a* fellow." *Right:* "He is a strange kind of fellow."

LAY, LIE: *lay* means *to deposit, lie* to *recline*. *Right:* "I *lay* the book on the table." "I *lie* down." The principal parts are *lay, laid, laid; lie, lay, lain.*

LEARN: means to *gain knowledge;* it is not a synonym for *teach*.

LESS: see FEWER.

LIABLE: see APT.

LIABLE, TO, FOR: "I was liable *to* him for damages (person)." "I was liable *for* damages (thing)."

LIE: see LAY.

LIKE: do not misuse for *as* or *as if*. *Like* is a preposition, not a conjunction. *Wrong:* "Do *like* I tell you." "I felt *like* I ought to tell him." *Right:* "Do *as* I tell you." "I felt *as if* I ought to tell him."

LIKELY: see APT.

LOCATE: colloquial when used as the equivalent of *settle*.

LOOSE, LOSE: do not confuse.

LOSE: see LOOSE.

LOSE OUT, WIN OUT: colloquial. Omit the *out*.

LOTS: colloquial for *many, a great deal.*

MAY, MIGHT: (1) *Might,* the past indicative of *may,* is often misused for *may* in subordinate clauses, violating the rule for the sequence of tenses. (See pp. 100-101.) *Right:* "I am studying in order that I *may* pass the examination." "I studied in order that I *might* pass the examination."

(2) The subjunctive *might* has the following chief uses:

(a) In the principal clauses of conditional sentences and in conditional statements—"If you urged him, he *might* come."

(b) A desire or wish not expected to be fulfilled—"Would that I *might* unsay it!"

MAY OF, MIGHT OF: see HAD OF.

MOST: means *in the highest degree*. It is colloquial when used in place of *almost* to mean *nearly*. *Wrong: "Most* everybody was there." *Right: "Almost* everyone came." "She was *most* cordial."

MOVED WITH, TO, AT, BY: "I was moved *with* pity." "I was moved *to* tears." "I was moved *at* his words." "I was moved *by* her tears."

MUTUAL: see COMMON.

NO ACCOUNT: colloquial for *worthless.*

NO PLACE: see ANY PLACE.

NOTORIOUS, NOTED: *notorious* implies *evil* or *wicked. Noted* means *eminent* or *celebrated.*

NOWHERE (NOWHERES) NEAR: dialectal for *not nearly.*

OFF OF: illiterate. Omit the *of*.

ON ACCOUNT OF: a prepositional phrase meaning *because of*. Not to be used as a conjunction introducing a clause. *Wrong: "On account of* I am sick, I cannot go." *Right:* "I am confined to the house *on account of* a cold."

ONLY: place as near as possible to the word it modifies.

ORAL, VERBAL: *oral* applies to *that which is spoken by word of mouth; verbal* applies strictly to *that which is communicated in words, whether spoken or written. Right: "oral* testimony"; "a *verbal* contract."

OUGHT TO OF: say *ought to have,* or *should have.*

OVER WITH: colloquial. Omit the *with.*

PARTED FROM, WITH: "He parted *from* his friend." "He parted *with* his watch."

PARTY: slang for *person.*

PHONE: as a verb or noun colloquial for *telephone.*

PLAN ON: colloquial. Omit *on.*

PLENTY: colloquial when used as an adverb: "He was *plenty* tired."

PLUS: do not use loosely for *in addition to.*

PRACTICAL, PRACTICABLE: *practical,* as distinguished from theoretical, means *valuable in practice; practicable* means *capable of being put into practice,* or *useful. Right:* "He was a *practical* man"; "He had a *practicable* plan."

PREFER: do not follow by *than; prefer to* is correct.

PRINCIPAL, PRINCIPLE: *principal* is always an adjective except when it means the *leader, chief,* or *head,* or when it refers to *a capital sum; principle* is a noun. *Right:* "Happiness was his *principal* object in life." "The *principal* of the school received five per cent interest on his *principal.*" "He was a man of high *principles.*"

PROPOSITION: colloquial when used to refer to a project, situation, a person requiring to be dealt with, or a business undertaking. Never to be used as a verb. *Wrong:* "Repairing the damage was a difficult *proposition.*" "He *propositioned* his client."

QUARREL OVER, BETWEEN, WITH: "We quarreled *over* the book." "The quarrel was *between* the two men." "I do not quarrel *with* your decision."

QUITE: means (1) *completely, entirely*—as, "He *quite* finished his work"; (2) *really, truly*—as, "He did the work *quite* completely." Do not use *quite* in the sense of *very* or *fairly*—as, "We had *quite* a good time."

RAISE: Do not misuse for *rear, bring up* (of a family), as, "He was *raised* in Iowa."

REAL: an adjective; do not misuse for *very. Wrong:* "I am *real* tired."

REASON IS BECAUSE: ungrammatical for *reason is that.* (See p. 118.)

RECONCILE WITH, TO: "I could not reconcile his decision *with* what he had previously told me." "He became reconciled *to* his reduced income."

RESPECTABLE, RESPECTFUL, RESPECTIVE: *respectable* means *worthy of respect; respectful* means *full of respect; respective* means *particular* or *several. Right:* "He was a *respectable* man." "The students were *respectful* toward the instructor." "They returned to their *respective* homes."

SAID: do not use for *aforesaid* or *before-mentioned* except in legal documents. *Wrong:* "He possessed said characteristics."

SAME: do not use as a pronoun except in legal documents. *Wrong:* "Send me twelve pounds of *same.*"

SCARCELY: see HARDLY.

SET, SIT: (1) *To set,* as a transitive verb, means *to cause to sit, to fix in a situation or direction, to establish,* also *to put a fowl on eggs to hatch them. Right:* "She *set* the dish on the table." "The farmer *set* the hen." As an intransitive verb it means *to sit* only when it refers to a fowl. *Right:* "The hen *set* on the nest." *Wrong:* "The dish *set* on the table." The principal parts are *set, set, set.*

(2) *To sit,* as a transitive verb, means *to sit upon* or *to seat. Right:* "He *sat* the horse well." "He *sat* himself down at the table." As an intransitive verb it means *to rest upon the haunches, to be situated,* or (referring to fowls) *to incubate. Right:* "He *sits* down at the table." "The dish *sits* on the table." "The farmer showed me a *sitting* hen." The principal parts are *sit, sat, sat.*

SHALL, WILL, SHOULD, WOULD: The problem of the correct use of these forms has caused untold disagreement. The elaborate distinctions which formerly existed seem to be breaking down—certainly in colloquial speech, where one seldom has the opportunity or inclination to search one's mind for the correct form. In formal writing, however, certain distinctions still exist, although even these are gradually disappearing. These formal distinctions may be briefly summarized as follows:

Shall and will

1. To express simple futurity:
   1st person: *shall*—as, "I *shall* go tonight."
   2nd and 3rd person: *will*—as, "You *will* find the book on the table."
2. To express determination or volition on the part of the speaker:
   1st person: *will*—as, "I *will* not allow it."
   2nd and 3rd person: *shall*—as, "He *shall* go, whether he wants to or not."

3. In direct questions:
   1st person: *shall*—as, *"Shall* we join the ladies?"
   2nd and 3rd person: employ the form desired in the answer—as, *"Shall* you go?" (*Desired answer:* "I *shall* [or *shall* not] go.") *"Will* he go?" (*Desired answer:* "He *will* [or *will* not] go.") *"Will* you help me?" (*Desired answer:* "I *will."* [volition.])

Should and would

1. *Should* and *would* replace *shall* and *will* in indirect discourse when the verb of saying is in the past, present perfect, or past perfect tense—as, "He said that he *would* come."
2. *Should* is used in all persons to express:
   (1) Obligation: "I (you, he, they, etc.) *should* do this."
   (2) Condition: If I (you, he, they, etc.) *should* do this, he would be grateful.
   (3) Expectation: "I (you, he, they, etc.) *should* have received a reply by now."
3. *Would* is used in all persons to express:
   (1) Customary past action: "I (you, he, they, etc.) *would* read by the hour."
   (2) A wish: *"Would* that I (you, he, they, etc.) were there!"
   (3) Insistence: "He *would* go there in spite of what I said."

SHOULD: see SHALL.

SHOULD OF: see HAD OF.

SIMILAR THAN: *similar* should be followed by *to.*

SIT: see SET.

SMALLER: see LESS.

SO: (1) Overworked as a connective. The preceding clause can usually be turned into an adverbial clause denoting cause. *Loose:* "I was tired; *so* I went to bed." *Preferred:* "Since I was tired, I went to bed."
  (2) When used as a connective in the sense of *therefore,* it should preferably be preceded by a semicolon or a coördinating conjunction. (See pp. 143-144, 155-156.)
  (3) Colloquial when used as the equivalent of *so that* in a result clause—as, "He worked *so* he might succeed."
  (4) Overworked as a synonym for *very*—as, "He is so handsome." This use of *so* is often called the "feminine intensive."

SOME: colloquial when used as an adverb meaning *somewhat*—as, "He was *some* tired."

SOME PLACE: see ANY PLACE.

SOMEWHERES: see ANYWHERES.

SORT: see KIND.

SORT OF: see KIND OF.

SPLIT INFINITIVE: objections to the split infinitive (as, *to* REALLY *study*) still survive. Avoid it where possible in formal writing; split an infinitive, however, rather than become involved in an awkward construction, or rather than be ambiguous.

STOP: colloquial for *stay for a short time* or *to reside temporarily* —as, "We *stopped* with friends in New York."

SUPERIOR THAN: superior *to* is correct.

SURE AND, TRY AND: colloquial. Replace *and* by *to* in such expressions as the following: "Be sure *and* do it." "I shall try *and* see him."

SURPRISED AT, BY: "I was surprised *at* his language." "I was surprised *by* a sudden noise."

SUSPICION: a noun; dialectal as a verb—as, "They *suspicioned* him to be the murderer."

TASTE FOR, OF: "I have a taste *for* candy." "I like the taste *of* candy."

THAN, AS: conjunctions, not prepositions. They are often followed by elliptical clauses. Complete the clauses in order to determine the case of the pronoun. *Wrong:* "He is taller *than* me (am tall); he is as tall *as* me (am tall)." (See p. 209.)

'TILL, 'TIL: the apostrophe in *'till* is not needed; *till* is not an abbreviation of *until;* it is a good word in its own right. *'Til* is never used except in poetry.

TOO, VERY: correctly modify adjectives and adverbs. When they modify a passive participle, they must be followed by *much.* To determine whether the modified word is an adjective or participle, apply two tests: (1) Has the participle really passed into a true adjective in common use? *Right:* "I am *very* tired. (2) Is the word used predicatively, as part of the verb? If so, *much* is needed. *Right:* "He was *very much* inconvenienced."

TRANSPIRE: means *to emerge from secrecy, to become known.* Careful writers avoid using the word loosely to mean *happen.*

TRY AND: see SURE AND.

UNINTERESTED: see DISINTERESTED.

UNIQUE: means properly *the only one of its kind.* Avoid using it loosely to mean *unusual* or *notable. Loose:* "He presented a very *unique* appearance."

U. S.: not to be loosely used as an abbreviation unless it precedes the name of a government department or a battleship.

VARY FROM, WITH: "They varied greatly *from* each other in temperament." "The crowds vary *with* the seasons."

VERBAL: see ORAL.

VERY: see TOO.

WAYS: dialectal and colloquial for *way,* meaning length of space, or distance—as, "This will go a long *ways* toward curing the trouble."

WILL: see SHALL.

WIN OUT: see LOSE OUT.

WITHOUT: a preposition. Do not use it instead of a conjunction as a substitute for *unless. Wrong:* "I cannot do it *without* you help me."

WORTH-WHILE: an adjective. When it is used predicatively, the hyphen is omitted. Never written as one word. *Right:* "Any *worth-while* cause interested him." "The cause was *worth while."* There is a tendency to overwork this word.

WOULD: see SHALL.

WOULD OF: see HAD OF.

Exercise 54. Diction

In the following sentences correct any mistakes of diction that you may find: faulty idioms; colloquialisms, improprieties, etc.; inexact words; awkward repetitions; mixed figures of speech; trite expressions; or sentences that lack euphony.

1. There was no hesitation about my accepting his proposition.
2. I left the room at once, as I did not like to listen to such things.
3. She told him that he had made his own bed and that he must sink or swim.
4. If they come altogether, like I told them to, they can offer no alibis for getting lost.
5. There is no doubt but what during the balance of the semester we will have to burn the midnight oil.
6. Though Snaith is a mutual friend of John's and mine, we were impatient at him for interfering with our work.
7. We all hated to loose out on the game; if it had of lasted two minutes longer, we would of been liable to win.
8. The team that they brought down was the best team that has graced local gridiron circles for some years.
9. His appearance was very unique; to say that he was a queer-looking individual is to put it mildly.
10. Be sure and wait 'till you get my phone call.
11. My mother and father located in Oregon in 1875, and there I was raised.
12. I do not know as you are right; anyways I will except your offer on account of I have nothing else to do.
13. In our parents' time it was not considered genteel for a lady to expose her limbs.
14. When the shades of night began to fall, we left the swimming pool and returned to my residence.
15. Opportunity knocks but once, and one should seize time by the forelock.

16. The audience seemed disinterested in his speech. Folks, I guess, are not intrigued by economical subjects.
17. The coach prated to the team between the halves, but he didn't seem to get anywheres.
18. I do not doubt but what the salubrity of the climate will improve his health.
19. His amatory advances had a repugnant affect upon the heroine of the drama.
20. Her epistle to him created an impression opposite from what she intended.

A LIST OF DICTIONARIES AND REFERENCE BOOKS

STANDARD DICTIONARIES

Craigie, Sir William (and others). *Dictionary of American English on Historical Principles.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1936.

Note: Volume 1 of this important dictionary was published in 1936. Other volumes will follow.

Funk and Wagnalls *New Standard Dictionary of the English Language.* N. Y.: Funk and Wagnalls, 1913.

Murray, Sir James A. H. *New English Dictionary on Historical Principles.* Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1884-1928.

Note: This dictionary (commonly known as the *Oxford Dictionary*) gives the history of over 400,000 words and is invaluable in tracing the derivations of words.

The New Century Dictionary. N. Y. and London: The Century Co., 1927-1930.

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G. ORIGINALITY OF EXPRESSION

It is rarely our privilege to conceive an entirely original thought. For the most part we must be content with restating old ideas, or combining old ideas, in new ways. But we need not thereby be discouraged. When Alexander Pope wrote,

> True wit is Nature to advantage dress'd,
> What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd

he was employing the word *wit* in its older sense, to denote not a neat turn of speech or a superficial mental activity, but rather intellectual capacity and intelligence. The effective writer is the man who can first *think,* and then *express* his ideas so well that they will be remembered.

A discussion of this aspect of original expression is beyond the scope of our present study. The purpose of this brief section is merely to provide the germ of an idea which may stimulate the student to analyze what he reads and to experiment for himself. Each example below [35] presents a thought expressed in two ways —first without distinction, then with originality. By comparing the versions and attempting to discover some of the secrets underlying distinctive expression and then by trying our hands at the exercise at the end of the section, we can vitalize our own thinking and individualize our means of expression.

Examples: If Cleopatra had been less beautiful, history would have been different.

If the nose of Cleopatra had been shorter, the whole face of the earth would have been changed.—BLAISE PASCAL

Talent is doing difficult things easily; genius is doing impossible things.

Doing easily what others found difficult is talent; doing what is impossible for talent is genius.—HENRI AMIEL

The man upstairs has the habit of dropping his shoes on the floor.

The man upstairs does not feel that his shoes are off until he has made the floor understand.—ALEXANDER BLACK

Wall papers are apt to be monotonous.

The Bible must have been referring to wall papers, I think, when it says, "Use not vain repetitions as the Gentiles do." —G. K. CHESTERTON

We all tend to look down at our neighbors.

The social plane always slants down toward the people next door.—FRANK MOORE COLBY

Mr. Kremlin was a very ignorant man; he was obsessed by one idea, and was usually wrong in everything.

Mr. Kremlin was distinguished for ignorance; for he had only one idea, and that was wrong.—BENJAMIN DISRAELI

A husband and wife become tired of each other.

In married life three is company and two is none.—OSCAR WILDE

A university should be a place of enlightenment, freedom, and learning.

A university should be a place of light, liberty, and learning. —BENJAMIN DISRAELI

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[35] For further examples, see Exercise 19, pp. 119-120.

Exercise 55. Originality of Expression

Rephrase the following ideas in as original a way as possible:

1. There are very few real homes in the land.
2. Most of us try unsuccessfully to dress to please other people.
3. Most fishermen are lazy.
4. A great deal of poetry is only prose in disguise.
5. If we follow precedents we tend to lose sight of the theories behind them.
6. It is easier to find fault than to be right yourself.
7. A small amount of education often does harm.
8. It is natural to make mistakes; but to forgive another person is more than human.
9. Misers get up early in the morning, but burglars have to get up even earlier.
10. A good memory is often an obstacle to thinking.
11. Man's insanity is shown by the fact that he is always inventing gods.
12. We are apt to believe most blindly the things about which we know the least.
13. Man has his desires, but it is God who regulates human affairs.
14. A person who has to beg is not in a position to be particular.
15. We almost always admire the people who hold the same opinions as we.
16. We can all endure other people's misfortunes more easily than our own.
17. Everyone is always very free in proffering advice.
18. A philosophy of life is a very necessary thing.
19. What is unnecessary is really necessary.
20. A woman does not preach well, but it is surprising that she can do it at all.

CHAPTER IX

MECHANICS[1]

A. CAPITALS

1. Capitalize the first word of a sentence.

2. Capitalize the first word of a quotation unless it is incorporated into the sentence as a phrase or clause.

Examples: Pope said, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."
Irving Babbitt referred to Montaigne as a "concentric individualist."

3. Capitalize proper nouns and, in general, adjectives derived from them.

Examples: He went to France.
He liked the French cooking.

4. Capitalize the first word in every line of poetry. (Some modern poets have abandoned this convention.)

5. Capitalize the names of languages, but not of other subjects of a school curriculum.

Examples: I studied Spanish and Latin.
I liked mathematics and physics.

6. Capitalize *Father, Mother,* and other family titles when used in direct address or when used as the equivalent of a proper name; also capitalize *Uncle, Aunt,* etc., when they are used in conjunction with a proper name.

Examples: I heard you, Father.
I saw my Uncle Henry.
I spoke to Father when he came home.

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[1] For an excellent treatment of Mechanics, see Sarah Augusta Tainter and Kate M. Munro, *The Secretary's Handbook* (4th ed.). New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934.

7. Capitalize points of the compass only when they designate geographical parts of the country.

Examples: I live in the East.
I looked toward the east.

8. Capitalize names of streets, parks, monuments, statues, and buildings.

Examples: He lives on Sycamore Street.
We walked up the Washington Monument.

9. Capitalize all important words in the titles of books, poems, plays, short stories, newspapers, musical compositions, and pictures.

Examples: I read *A Tale of Two Cities.*
I read the Washington *News.*

10. Capitalize only the first words of the greeting and the close of a letter (unless these words are proper names, titles, etc.).

Examples: My dear Mrs. Smith, . . . Very sincerely yours,
Dear President Jones, . . . Faithfully yours,

(For the use of italics in titles, see section C, p. 276.)

B. THE HYPHEN [2]

1. Use a hyphen to separate certain compounds. Although no mandatory rules exist for the hyphenation of compounds, certain generalizations can be made. When in doubt the student should consult a dictionary. The following general principles can be observed:

a. Use a hyphen:

(1) If the second element is capitalized—as, *pro-British.*
(2) If both the first form ends and the second form begins with *a* or *i*—as, *extra-alimentary, semi-independent.*
(3) If *co-* is followed by *o,*[3] or if *pre-* or *re-* is followed by *e* —as, *co-operate, pre-empt, re-enter.*

---

[2] The rules in this section have been simplified and adapted from *Webster's New International Dictionary* (2nd edition). For further refinements and exceptions in hyphenation, see *Webster, compound* and *hyphen;* in syllabication, see *Webster,* pp. lviii-lvix.

[3] In modern usage the hyphen is often omitted and a diaeresis placed over the second "o"—as, *coöperate.*

(4) If *re-* is followed by an element in its literal sense, forming a word identical in form with one of a secondary sense—as, *re-create, recreate.*

(5) If the lack of a hyphen makes a situation confusing or ambiguous—as, *co-worker.*

(6) If the same letter occurs three times in succession—as, *bell-like.*

(7) If the compound is impromptu—as, *tick-tock, clop-clop.*

(8) If the compound consists of temporarily united combinations—as, *a kind of caught-in-the-act look.*

(9) If the compound is based on a syntactical relation—as, *side-splitting.*

(10) If compound numerals are spelled out—as *twenty-five.*

(11) If the compound is a prepositional-phrase combination—as, *mother-in-law.*

(12) If the prefix is *self-* —as, *self-conscious.*

b. Compounds are usually written solid:

(1) If the first element is a prefix—as *semiconscious.*

(2) If the last element is a suffix—as, *hublike.*

2. Use the hyphen to syllabify words in accordance with the following rules:

a. Place the hyphen (-) at the end of the line; never at the beginning.

b. Do not divide monosyllables or words of less than five letters.

c. Never divide a word so as to leave one or two letters standing alone as a syllable.

d. Divide words only between syllables.

e. If words begin with a prefix or end with a suffix, separate the prefix or suffix—as, *trans-port, fail-ing.*

(1) Do not separate *-ed* unless it forms a syllable—as, *want-ed.*

(2) Do not separate final *-le.*

(3) If a final consonant is doubled before a suffix, divide between the consonants—as, *bar-ring, bat-ted.*

Note: If the word ends in a double consonant, do not divide between consonants—as, *pas-sing, tol-ling.*

f. Divide according to the sound words ending in *-able, -ance, -ant, -ent, -ible, -ical, -ive*—as, *lik-able, ob-serv-ance, pleas-ant, pen-i-tence, pos-si-ble, com-i-cal, res-tive.*

g. If a single consonant or digraph (*i.e.,* two letters representing a single simple speech sound—as, *bead, thin, sign*) comes between two sounded vowels, the consonant or digraph is written with the following syllable—as, *me-ter, mo-ther, beau-ti-ful.*

> *Exception:* If the preceding vowel is short and accented, the consonant or digraph ends the syllable (as *bal-ance, treas-u-ry*).

h. When two (or more) consonants capable of beginning a word come between two sounded vowels:

- (1) *BOTH of the consonants are joined to the following vowel:*
  - (a) If the preceding vowel is long—as, *en-ā-bling, sē-cret.*
  - (b) If the following vowel is an accented syllable—as, *en-clóse, re-próof.*
- (2) *The consonants are divided if the preceding vowel is short*—as, *gŏb-let, rĕs-cue.*

i. When two (or more) consonants are not capable of beginning a word or syllable, one or more, but not all of them, are joined to the preceding vowel—as, *van-tage, tech-ni-cal, leng-then.*

C. ITALICS[4]

1. Italicize a letter or word when it is referred to as a letter or word.

Examples: The word *home* means much to me.
Form the plural by adding *s* to the singular.

2. Italicize the titles of books, newspapers, magazines, long poems, long musical compositions, plays, pictures, and names of ships.

Examples: Have you read *Paradise Lost?*
The class read Lawson's play *Success Story.*

Note: Do not italicize the name of a city before a newspaper title.

Example: I subscribe to the London *Times.*

---

[4] In handwriting and typing, italics are indicated by underscoring.

3. Italicize foreign words (and abbreviations of foreign words) which have not become a part of the English language.

Examples: He ordered *à la carte.*
Ibid., p. 32.

Note 1: The following foreign words and phrases, among others, have now become a part of the English language: belles-lettres, bon mot, chic, coup, faux pas, foyer, melee, naïveté, nee, opus, porte-cochere, salon.

The following are still italicized: *à la carte, raison d'être, status quo.*

Note 2: When translating foreign words or expressions, enclose the translation in quotation marks (see D 3, p. 278)—as, The Latin word *amo* means "to love."

4. Italicize sparingly for emphasis. Do not rely on italics to gain emphasis when an emphatic sentence would be more effective.

Example: Wrong: He was *so* intelligent.

D. QUOTATION MARKS

(See also pp. 152-154.)

1. Enclose in quotation marks words used in a special technical sense.[5]

Example: A writer should avoid "prepositionitis."

2. Enclose in quotation marks slang words or phrases, and words used with an ironical or humorous implication.[5]

Example: His "style" caused the neighbors much amusement.

Note 1: The quotation marks are omitted in direct quotations and in dialogue.

Note 2: If the context indicates that the word is slang, the quotation marks are not necessary.

---

[5] The quotation marks may be omitted when the words or expressions are used a second time.

3. Enclose in quotation marks definitions and translated terms.

Example: Burgle is a humorous word which means "to commit burglary."

4. Enclose in quotation marks titles of short poems, short musical compositions, short stories, essays, magazine articles, and chapters of books.

Example: We read Hemingway's story "The End of Something."

Note: Do not enclose in quotation marks the title of a theme unless the title is a quotation.

5. Do not overuse quotation marks, especially to emphasize intended humor or to excuse bad usage, slang, or an inadequate vocabulary.

Example: Judging by his actions, he was having his usual "argument" with his "date."

E. NUMBERS

1. Write out all Arabic numbers under a hundred.

Example: He will come in fifteen minutes.

2. Write out round numbers of approximate figures.

Example: We traveled four or five hundred miles.

3. Write out round numbers for sums of money if they can be represented in one or two words.

Example: He earned two hundred dollars.

4. Do not place numerals at the beginning of a sentence.

Examples: Wrong: $25,000 was his annual salary.
Right: His annual salary was $25,000.

Note: If it is necessary to place figures at the beginning of a sentence, they should be written out—as, *Five million dollars was spent last year.*

5. Be consistent in either writing out figures or using figures.

Example: Wrong: Four out of every 5 have it.
Right: Four out of every five have it.

6. Write out the names of decades and centuries.

Examples: He lived in the nineteenth century.
He lived in the gay nineties.

7. Preferably write out the time of day except when used in conjunction with the abbreviations *a.m.* and *p.m.*

Example: Questionable: He came at five p.m.
Preferred: He came at 5 p.m.

8. Write out the names of streets. If the streets are numbered, write out those up to twelve.

Examples: He lived on Sixth Street.
The shop is at 423 15th Street.

F. PERSONAL TITLES

1. Capitalize an official, honorary, professional, or descriptive title standing before a name and forming a part of it, or standing alone and used instead of the name of a specific person.

Examples: He shook hands with President Roosevelt.
At the White House he shook hands with the President.

a. Do not capitalize personal titles in the body of a text where they are used merely to describe or designate, not a specific individual, but any holder of an office.

Examples: His ambition was to become general manager.
He was made a full professor.

b. Do not capitalize the official title of a person when the title follows the name or when it precedes the name and is preceded by *the*.

Examples: You should go to see Albert Smith, professor of political science.

Charles V., king of England, was beheaded in 1649.
The apostle Peter was headstrong.

Exception: In addresses on letters and on official lists capitalize such titles as President, General Manager, Secretary of State, etc.

2. Abbreviate sparingly. When in doubt, spell out.

a. Spell out all given names, such as *Charles* (not *Chas.*).

b. Spell out all civil, religious, and military titles (except Mr., Mrs., and Messrs.) when they are used before names.

Examples: I once saw General Pershing.
He greatly admired President Wilson.

c. Spell out titles when they are used alone.

Example: I am glad to see you, Doctor!

d. Do not abbreviate a title when the surname is followed by initials denoting an academic degree.

Examples: Wrong: Dr. Smith, Ph.D.
Right: Doctor Henry Smith, Ph.D.

3. Do not write *Rev. Jones, Reverend Jones,* or *The Reverend Jones.* Write instead *The Reverend Doctor* (or *Dr.*) *Jones,* or *The Reverend* (or *The Rev.*) *Mr. Jones,* or *The Reverend* (or *The Rev.*) *Thomas Jones.*

G. ABBREVIATIONS [6]

1. Contractions are not followed by a period. (Contractions are forms of words shortened by omitting certain letters and indicating the omission by inserting apostrophes.)

Example: See the reference in section 42 (*cont'd*), p. 36

2. Abbreviations are usually followed by a period.

Exception: Per cent has lost its significance as an abbreviation.

3. In ordinary writing do not use the abbreviation *U. S.* for *United States,* unless it precedes the name of a government department or a battleship.

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[6] For abbreviations of personal titles, see F 2, above.

Exercise 56. Mechanics

Rewrite the following sentences, correcting all errors in mechanics:

1. When I was in school I found Mathematics and Spanish difficult.
2. He has bought a new ford and will soon take a trip east.
3. I read in the *Baltimore Sun* that Hon. Westall was fined about $200 for driving over 50 miles an hour.
4. You can make about 4 per cent. on most investments.
5. The South has recently produced some excellent literature. Maristan Chapman's novel "The Happy Mountain" and the play *The Green Pastures* are notable examples.
6. I lived at two hundred Penna. Ave., not far from the capitol.
7. I prefer to order a la carte when I go to the "big city."
8. His e's look like i's; his handwriting is *terrible*!
9. My Father took me West last summer to visit my uncle Henry.
10. I read his article *Home Again* in the last issue of *Harper's Magazine*.
11. Rev. Samuel Jones and Dr. Arthur B. Smith are great friends.
12. I shall ask father to take me up the Washington monument.
13. The govt. should try to maintain the status quo.
14. Label the next page page 43 (cont'd.), if you please.
15. I invited Col. and Mrs. Crabtree to lunch.
16. Dr. Grill, Ph.D. is the professor of Psychology.
17. I will arrange to see the President when I am in town.
18. The matter was referred to the Sec'y. of War.
19. When I was in Europe, I saw the original of the Mona Lisa.
20. My Dear Bob, . . . Always your Friend, . . .
21. Mr. Rumsey, General Manager of the company, spoke.
22. The Reverend Matthews presided at the service.
23. I shall never forget your kindness, professor.
24. You will find the reference in Vol six, p 3.
25. I can never spell the word ceiling.

Exercise 57. Correction of Student Theme

(1) Copy *exactly* the student theme reprinted on page 29. (2) Correct the theme, using the system of symbols and abbreviations employed by your instructor. Pay especial attention to the following possible errors in the theme: grammar, spelling, punctuation, diction, sentence structure, clarity of thought, and style.

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